



**COMHAIRLE CHONTAE LOCH GARMAN
WEXFORD COUNTY COUNCIL**

**COUNTY
DEVELOPMENT PLAN
2001**

Note: This document has been amended to include variations 1,2 and 4. Variation 3 was dropped. Variation 4 may also be downloaded separately for those with existing plans wishing to be amended.

ADOPTED BY WEXFORD COUNTY COUNCIL ON 11TH JUNE, 2001

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Introduction

The County Development Plan which incorporates a series of Village/Area Plans sets out Wexford County Council's intentions for the future development of land including measures for the conservation and improvement of the natural and physical environment and the provision of infrastructure.

It is intended that the Plan, in conjunction with the various Towns and Environs plans, will provide:

- *Clear guidance on the future use of land and pattern of development over the next five years.*
- *A framework for future investment in social and physical infrastructure.*
- *A framework for developing the County's economy.*
- *Management and control by indicating standards and principles to be achieved in new development.*
- *Ways to conserve and enhance the urban and rural environment and to protect the diversity of the natural and cultural landscape.*
- *Guidance for public and private investors in relation to land use and development.*

The plan seeks to reconcile the demand for necessary development to meet the needs and aspirations of the people of County Wexford, to tackle social exclusion and to conserve environmental assets and resources necessary for the long-term prosperity and quality of life of the community.

Wexford County Council intends to take a positive approach to development. New development opportunities will not be restricted unless there are strong persuasive justifications for doing so having regard to European Union, National and Regional policies. The Council recognises that prudent long term planning will help mitigate the unacceptable adverse impacts of development.

Where primarily concerned with physical land use, the plan will address a wide range of interrelated social, economic and environmental issues of importance in achieving sustainable development and social inclusion.

The strategy, policies and objectives contained in the County Development Plan will be subject to monitoring and periodic review having regard to changing social, economic and environmental circumstances in the County and evolving European and National legislation.

The County Development Plan has been prepared in accordance with the procedures and requirements contained in the Local Government (Planning and Development) Acts 1963 – 1998 and the Local Government (Planning and Development) Regulations 1994 – 1999. The County Council adopted the previous County Development Plan in 1993.

The plan has evolved from a review and analysis of policies and objectives contained in the County Wexford Development Plan 1993 and a comprehensive public consultation process based on the publication of the document “Strategic Planning Issues for County Wexford.”

The plan comprises this document, the written statement, and a range of maps. The written statement and maps should be read in conjunction with each other. Reference should also be made to the individual Town and Environs Plans which, with the County Development Plan, are designed to ensure that the future planning and development of County Wexford is approached in an integrated and balanced way.

Chapter 1

County Profile

Introduction

- 1.1 County Wexford is strategically located in the extreme southeast corner of Ireland with direct sea links to the United Kingdom and Continental Europe. The County is characterised by:
- It's distinctive landscapes including the environmentally sensitive lakes and lagoons along the south coast, the Hook peninsula, the Slaney and Barrow river valleys, the Blackstairs Mountains and hills to the north-west and the patchwork of fields and farms which make up the lowland areas.
 - It's length of sandy beaches
 - It's wealth of vernacular buildings including a unique resource of thatched houses
 - Many buildings, sites and monuments of architectural and historic importance.
 - A range of attractive towns, villages and settlements

Demographic Change and Trends

- 1.2 The total population of County Wexford in 1996 was 104,371 persons. This represents an increase of 2.3% between 1991 and 1996 and reflects national trends for that period. There are however differences in age structure when compared with the rest of the country, in particular the number of people in older age groups. Significantly 41% of the population was under 25 in 1996.
- 1.3 While the total population increased in the period 1991 – 1996, parts of the County experienced population decline. Growth was predominantly concentrated in eastern and south-eastern areas, in coastal areas and in proximity to the main towns, particularly Wexford and Gorey.
- 1.4 In 1996, 68% of the population lived in rural areas i.e. outside Aggregate Town Areas¹. During the period from 1991 to 1996, the rate of population

¹ Aggregate Town Areas are defined as areas with 1,500 or more persons

increase was greater in rural areas than in urban centres. The share of population accounted for by urban centres fell, while that of the environs of the towns of Wexford, Enniscorthy, New Ross and Gorey continued to rise.

Settlements and Households

- 1.5 Wexford is a predominantly rural county with a strong well spread pattern of interdependent towns and villages connected by the national and regional road networks. The principal towns provide employment and services to the surrounding dispersed rural community. There are a considerable number of smaller villages and settlement clusters with populations below 1500 persons. Some of these have witnessed rapid population growth in recent years, most notably Rosslare Harbour/Kilrane, Rosslare, Ferns, Castlebridge, Curraclloe, Courtown Harbour, Blackwater, Piercetown, Fethard-on-Sea and Kilmuckridge. These areas continue to experience severe development pressure.
- 1.6 The County is characterised by a high number of holiday homes and second homes owned by people from outside the County. Much of the growth in housing output and of work in progress is related to holiday homes, concentrated in and around coastal settlements.
- 1.7 There is increasing evidence of commuting from the towns and villages of the County to the Greater Dublin Area.
- 1.8 Average household size of 3.26 persons in 1996 in County Wexford was marginally above the national average of 3.14 persons.
- 1.9 Rapid household formation has been a feature of demographic change in the 1990s. This trend is expected to continue because of the large numbers entering the household forming 20 – 35 age groups and the move towards one and two person households due to smaller family sizes, an ageing population, family break-up and the greater affluence and independence of young people.

- 1.10 Long term projections for new household formation at county level must be treated with caution particularly in a county with high levels of in-migration. Based on current trends it is anticipated that the increase in County Wexford will be in excess of 10,000 new households over twenty years. Most of these new houses will be constructed in the principal towns and their environs. It is intended to keep the estimated figure for new household formation countywide under review, and to make strategic policy changes as appropriate over the plan period. The County Council will also be guided by the National Spatial Strategy in this regard.
- 1.11 As the estimate for new households used 1996 as a baseline, it can be assumed that some of the expected growth will already have been accommodated in the many new developments currently taking place, and that more will be catered for by development proposals currently in the planning process.

The Rural Area

- 1.12 The predominant rural land use is agriculture, based on good quality land with above average farm sizes. Forest cover is low with extremely limited levels of planting in comparison with the neighbouring counties of Wicklow and Waterford. Rural upland and coastal areas contain landscapes of high scenic character and amenity value. Issues faced by the rural area relate primarily to development pressures for the expansion, in suburban form, of towns and villages, one – off housing, tourism and leisure. The environmental attractiveness of the County and its increasing accessibility from the Greater Dublin Area add to these pressures.

Employment & Education

- 1.13 Structural difficulties in agriculture, low productivity in the traditional manufacturing sector and lack of foreign direct investment have traditionally created economic difficulties in the County. Employment in the public administration and professional services sector is comparatively low though

the recent relocation of the Environmental Protection Agency and Department of Agriculture and Food personnel to the County will help to change this situation.

1.14 Future economic progress will require:

- *Recognition of role and importance of the service sector and telecommunications, the small business sector, changing work patterns, part-time employment and home working.*
- *The diversification and restructuring of agriculture*
- *The development of sustainable tourism underpinned by the conservation and management of environmental resources.*
- *The attraction of inward investment*
- *The provision of infrastructure*
- *Co-operation between all sectors of the community.*

1.15 Educational attainment and participation in the County is a cause for concern. The proportion of the population aged 15 and over in education is relatively low as is the proportion holding third level qualifications compared with the situation nationally. While there is a satisfactory provision of second level facilities with a range of options there is no third level college in the County.

Health and Quality of Life

1.16 A high quality environment, good housing and access to a range of social and community facilities contribute to the quality of life and health of the community. While environmental quality and the standard of housing are generally good, many people in County Wexford are excluded from participation in the community and experiencing the benefits of increased prosperity because of poverty, disability, low educational attainment, and lack of access to transport. There are also pockets of urban and rural deprivation while a sense of isolation can exist in remoter rural areas. The trend towards an ageing population in the future will require the provision of housing, health, social services and community facilities to meet specific

needs. The policies and objectives contained in this plan are designed to tackle these issues by improving access to housing, jobs, facilities, amenities and transport.

The Environment, Conservation and Renewal

- 1.17 County Wexford has a wide variety of environmental assets and resources including:
- Areas of high landscape quality and character
 - Habitats and areas of nature conservation value supporting a rich biodiversity including proposed Natural Heritage Areas, candidate Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and National Nature Reserves, several of which are designated as of international importance.
 - Over 1,600 identified sites, areas and monuments of archaeological importance
 - In excess of 300 historic buildings and structures
- 1.18 International environmental concerns are reflected in local expectations that environmental resources and assets are protected and conserved. The scale, pace and widely dispersed nature of modern housing, agricultural, infrastructural and tourism development is perceived as detrimental to the viability and distinctiveness of the County's environment.
- 1.19 Public awareness of environmental issues is growing. Environmental impact, sustainability and the protection of the character and distinctiveness of local areas are key issues in the planning and development process. Community involvement in environmental planning is expected to increase.
- 1.20 The conservation and renewal of the built and natural environment is a major function of the plan. In addition, the County Council will promote in association with local communities, improvement schemes to upgrade urban and rural areas of poor environmental quality.

Tourism, Leisure and Recreation

- 1.21 The County has many natural assets and advantages for recreation, leisure and tourism. The coastline and beaches have traditionally been the mainstays of the tourism sector. The County Council will facilitate the growth of tourism while seeking to expand the tourism base to avoid over concentration in a limited number of areas. Improving the tourism product and extending the season will also be considerations.
- 1.22 The demand for recreation and leisure facilities is growing. Increasing mobility, prosperity and life style changes have generated this demand which needs to be accommodated.

Infrastructure

- 1.23 Rapid growth in demand for housing is placing considerable strain on existing infrastructure including water supplies, wastewater treatment, waste management and transportation.
- 1.24 **Water:**
Major regional water supply schemes are currently under construction in the Fardystown area in the south-east of the county and in the Gorey area; many improvements to smaller schemes have taken place over the past five years and a planned programme for a future improvement is in place. The Council through the Rural Water Programme has assisted in the provision and improvement of water supplies both for individuals and group schemes. The County Wexford Water Conservation Scheme commenced in 1998.
- 1.25 **Wastewater Treatment:**
The County Council is currently engaged in a major programme to upgrade drainage infrastructure to remedy deficiencies, meet demand and comply with European Union and National Legislation. Significant achievements have been made in relation to larger schemes in urban areas. A programme of schemes in villages and settlements is being implemented.

1.26 **Waste Management:**

The primary method of solid waste disposal is by landfill at Killurin. This site is almost at capacity. Alternative arrangements for waste are being pursued by the Council. A Waste Management Plan has been adopted and a recycling scheme is in operation.

1.27 **Transportation:**

As a rural County with a dispersed pattern of settlement, Wexford is highly dependent on a roads based transport system and use of the private car. Car ownership in the County has increased significantly and this trend is predicted to continue. National growth rates are in the order of 7% per year.

1.28 The standard and quality of the national road network has improved steadily and major investment is planned to bring the entire network to required modern standards. Two Euroroutes traverse the County E01 and E02 converging on Rosslare Harbour Europort. An on-going programme to carry out improvements to the regional and county road networks is in place.

1.29 **Public Transport:**

The public transport system, though improving is still inadequate to meet the social and economic development needs of the County. The Dublin-Rosslare Harbour railway line carries up to 0.5 million passengers per year, an additional number of commuters and freight to Rosslare Harbour Europort. Investment is needed in line and signalling infrastructure.

1.30 Scheduled bus services form part of the national network with some linkages to local services. Generally rural areas are poorly served however.

Shopping

1.31 Shopping provision is based on the four principal towns, Wexford, Enniscorthy, New Ross and Gorey. All of these areas face growing competition from larger national and regional centres. The plan focuses on the need to support the future viability of the towns which in addition to

shopping provide a range of services and leisure facilities. Pressure for large scale out of town shopping facilities is also becoming evident. Demand for these facilities which help to broaden and improve the quality of shopping provision must be balanced against potential adverse impacts on the viability and vitality of town centre areas.

Chapter Two

Planning Context

Introduction

- 2.1 The County Development Plan has an important role to play in delivering International, National and Regional policies and obligations which affect land use planning and development in the County. A number of changes have taken place in this area since the adoption of the previous County Development Plan in 1993, the implications of which must be addressed in this Plan.

European Union

- 2.2 The European Union will continue to have an important influence on planning and development in County Wexford. This influence will be through the extension of environmental assessment procedures and requirements, and the various Directives relating to environmental conservation and protection. The provision of structural and cohesion funding will have a critical role in facilitating the infrastructural development necessary to implement the development strategy contained in the County Development Plan.
- 2.3 The European Commission has identified a number of strategic priorities for community policies including the development of urban and rural areas. Planning in such areas will be pursued through integrated strategies under pinned by the principle of sustainable development. The Commission Guidelines view urban and rural areas as being critical to balanced territorial development:
- *Urban development within an integrated regional policy*
 - *Rural development for modernisation, diversification and environmental protection.*
- 2.4 The European Council has confirmed the political priority of integrating the environment in structural and agricultural policies in the context of “**Agenda 2000**” – **For a Stronger and Wider Union**. This requires compliance with

European Union environmental and nature conservation legislation, in respect of development benefiting from European Union funding.

2.5 **Agenda 2000** also emphasises the need for a more coherent and wide ranging rural development policy, coupled with an integrated spatial approach.

2.6 The Plan will have regard to the policy goals set out in the **European Spatial Development Perspective** published in May 1999 which includes:-

- *Polycentric spatial development* and a new urban-rural relationship*
- *Wise management and conservation of natural resources and cultural heritage*
- *Parity of access to infrastructure and knowledge*
- *Economic and social cohesion*

National

2.7 The period to be covered by the County Development Plan coincides with that of the **National Development Plan 2000 – 2006** published in November 1999, whose objectives include:

- *Continuing sustainable national economic and employment growth, while ensuring a better distribution of the benefits of such growth both regionally and throughout society with an appropriate balance between the environment and development*
- *Fostering balanced Regional Development with concurrent policies to ease the pressure on urban infrastructure, to tackle urban and rural poverty, to spread the benefits of growth to smaller urban and rural areas and over the long term to better integrate physical and economic planning through more effective land use*
- *Promoting Social Inclusion*
- *Consolidating and improving Ireland's international competitiveness*

*Polycentric spatial development implies decentralised development with several urban centres of national/regional scale and a large number of dynamic towns and urban clusters well distributed throughout Ireland, including the more peripheral and rural areas.

2.8 The National Development Plan identifies key priority areas for investment in meeting those objectives;

- *Economic infrastructure primarily, roads, public transport and the environment*
- *Employment and human resource development*
- *Productive sector investment*
- *Rural development*
- *Social inclusion*
- *Social capital (housing and health capital)*

2.9 In pursuance of objectives in promoting balanced regional development, it is proposed in the National Development Plan to prepare a National Spatial Strategy which will take the form of a broad planning strategy for the country as a whole. This will guide planning policy at local level. This national strategy will:

- *Identify broad spatial development patterns for areas and set down indicative policies in relation to the location of industrial development, residential development, rural development, tourism and heritage*
- *Develop and present a dynamic conception of the Irish urban system, together with its links to rural areas, which recognises and utilises their economic and social interdependence.*

2.10 The National Development Plan provides for a “gateways” approach to urban and rural development. It proposes structural funding investment to support urban and village renewal, and the development of rural water supplies in support of balanced regional development.

2.11 The principles of sustainability are set out in the **National Sustainable Development Strategy** published in 1997. These have been enshrined in Government Policy. This Strategy seeks “ *to ensure that the economy and society in Ireland develop to their full potential within a well protected*

environment, without compromising the quality of that environment, and with responsibility towards present and future generations and the wider international community.” These principles also underpin the strategy set out in the National Development Plan which lists the main environmental challenges to be addressed by the plan and other policy measures including.:

- *Halting the decline in the quality of rivers and lakes caused by excessive inputs of nutrients (eutrophication)*
- *Better management of solid waste*
- *Meeting our Kyoto commitment to limit the growth of greenhouse gas emissions*
- *Protecting the urban environment*
- *Protecting flora and fauna in the countryside and along the coast.*

2.12 A range of measures to address the environmental and social aspects of sustainable development are identified in the National Development Plan including:

- *A National Spatial Strategy*
- *Better integration of land use and transport planning*
- *Enhancement of the eco-efficient road network, substantial investment in public transport and development of demand management measures*
- *Support climatic change policy objectives*
- *Assistance towards achievement of sustainable agriculture through Rural Environment Protection and Control of Farmyard Pollution Schemes*
- *Improvement in water supply and wastewater treatment facilities in accordance with the Drinking Water and Urban Wastewater Directives and national legislation*
- *Implementation of waste management strategies*
- *Support for environmental research*

Regional

2.13 For the purposes of the National Development Plan, County Wexford will form part of the Southern and Eastern Region. The National Development Plan identifies key challenges in this region, which Wexford County Council must address in its County Development Plan and other plans and programmes. These include;

- *Consolidate and build on its recent economic performance*
- *Further develop counter-balances to Dublin*
- *Address urban congestion and bottlenecks through targeted investment in infrastructure and human capital*
- *Facilitate more balanced economic growth across the Region*
- *Support the further development of agriculture and agri-business, tourism, fisheries and agriculture development*
- *Promote social inclusion in deprived urban and rural areas*
- *Maintain a viable rural economy.*

Local

2.14 The County Council is proposing a Local Agenda 21 plan to promote the principles of sustainable development at a local level including;

- *Promoting the active involvement of the community through provision of information, public consultation and joint partnerships*
- *Permitting a wide range of land uses under each zoning objective (compatible with protecting existing amenities), to help reduce the need to travel and to reduce travel distance and time*
- *Ensuring a broad mix of zones throughout the County to facilitate a balance of housing, jobs and facilities*
- *Promoting more compact urban form, particularly higher residential densities in the vicinity of public transport corridors*

Chapter 3

Development Strategy

3.1 Strategic Vision

3.1.1. The National Development Plan 2000 – 2006 envisages sustained growth in the national economy over the Plan period. Accommodating this level of growth and meeting the community's social and economic needs will place increasing demands on County Wexford's environmental capacity. In particular the trend towards smaller household sizes is resulting in increased pressure for housing, services and infrastructure. Growing prosperity and changing lifestyle aspirations are placing pressure on our resources, and giving rise to increasing pressure focused on small rural towns, villages, settlements and coastal areas. At the same time concern in the community about planning and environmental issues continues to grow necessitating an appropriate strategic response.

3.1.2 Change resulting from economic and social development has inevitable implications for County Wexford's natural and built environment. The County Development Plan through its strategy, policies and objectives seeks to manage this change and arrive at a balance between the environment and development. In doing so, it will ensure that adverse impacts on the integrity of the environment and the quality of life of the community are minimised.

3.1.3 The strategic vision for the future development of the County is based on a number of guiding principles and key themes, which emerged in the public consultation process, and from a review of major planning issues and concerns:

- **Sustainability** – which recognises:
 - The interdependence between the environment and economy with the environment providing the source and context for long term social and economic progress. This principle reflects European and National concerns for the preservation of assets for future generations. Economic and social development must not be to the detriment of

environmental quality. A healthy, well-managed environment in County Wexford will play a critical role in:

- *Providing a strong marketing image and focus*
- *Attracting inward investment*
- *Underpinning the tourism and leisure industries*
- *Facilitating the development of fishing, forestry and a strong diversified farming sector*

Sustainability – A Long Term Objective.

More sustainable patterns of development will only be realised in the long term. The strategy contained in this Plan is designed to give impetus in moving in the desired direction. Development which seeks to balance social, economic and environmental factors requires the co-operation and support of many interest groups, agencies and communities. The planning system cannot achieve sustainability on its own but has a critical role in:

- Taking a long term perspective of change
- Protecting and conserving the environment
- Promoting equity and inclusivity in social and economic development

- **Inclusivity** – which recognises:
 - That the costs and benefits of development should be widely and equitably spread between all sections of the community, and that all sections of the community should have access to assets and resources and a better quality of life
 - The interrelationship and interdependence between different parts of the County and of urban and rural areas, and the need to plan for an equitable spatial spread of development so that all areas share in the benefits of development

- The need to promote public transport initiatives for people in isolated areas and disadvantaged members of the community who do not have access to a private car
- The need for a co-operative, partnership approach to planning and development between all social, economic and environmental groups, developers and public authorities, and the value and importance of co-operation at a local level

Despite rapid economic growth and increased prosperity, social inequality and exclusion continues to be a reality for some sectors of the community. Social disadvantage is usually concentrated in specific isolated pockets in both urban and rural areas. Its elimination requires the application of a wide range of measures and policy responses, many of which are beyond the remit of the planning process. An integrated planning approach does have a supportive role to play in the areas of housing, transport and accessibility, environmental improvement, employment and enterprise.

- **Physical Regeneration and Environmental Improvement**

- which recognises:

- The importance of this principle in its own right and in helping to achieve other planning objectives including economic development, urban renewal and the protection of environmental assets
- The need to provide and maintain an environment which enhances the health of the community and supports economic and human development

- **Accessibility** – which recognises:

- The need for integration between land and transportation
- The problems of the less mobile, the isolated and those without access to private transport

- The needs of the County’s economy in terms of effective transport and communications systems to move goods and people

- **Community Identity Development and Involvement** – which recognises:

- The role and value of local communities in identifying local problems and working towards their solution in a planned and integrated way
- The importance of local communities’ sense of identity and place in both urban and rural areas and the growing desire on behalf of such communities to protect local environments and distinctiveness

- **Flexibility** – which recognises

- that the plan must be sufficiently flexible to respond positively to changing social, economic and environmental circumstances and priorities at national and local levels
- allowance must also be made for presently unanticipated and unforeseen development initiatives and proposals which would be of benefit to local areas the County as a whole or the wider region through the provision of:
 - *Sustainable employment opportunities*
 - *Housing, social, recreational and community facilities*
 - *Services and amenities*
 - *Necessary infrastructure*

3.1.4 The management of change must be guided by a clearly stated long term vision for the future of County Wexford. This vision will provide the values to be followed in the Plan and inform policy formulation and the identification of objectives. Without this long term perspective, there is the risk of planning to accommodate short term trends which may be unsustainable in the long term. The County Council considers that the three strands of the economy, environment and social development need to be

balanced and integrated with a view to a more sustainable future. The **vision** for County Wexford which emerges from this and from the public consultation process is:

“County Wexford as a distinctive rural, coastal County with its unique cultural heritage, including it’s historic urban centres, conserved and enhanced, providing the context for its community and visitors to enjoy a high quality of life, reflected in a County”:

- *Where all sectors of the community are suitably housed as far as possible in a location of their choice*
- *With an ecologically sound, visually pleasing, pollution free environment*
- *Where the community has a strong sense and understanding of the need to protect the landscape and cultural heritage*
- *With vibrant rural settlements and communities with trends of stagnation and decline in some areas arrested and reversed.*
- *With a strong economy based on a well-educated, highly skilled workforce and on development, which does not detract from the natural assets and resources.*
- *Where creativity, innovation and competitiveness are promoted*
- *Which is an alternative location for enterprise, tourism and recreation*
- *Where development is equitably spread, spatially balanced and pursued in an inclusive manner*
- *Where all of the population has access to a wide range of services and community facilities, and share in the attractiveness and qualities of the County*
- *With efficient, safe and environmentally friendly transportation and communications systems*

Objectives

3.1.5 The realisation of this vision requires the identification of key objectives, which underpin the overall planning strategy:

Social Objectives:

- *To provide new affordable housing to meet local need and the special needs of disadvantaged groups*
- *To provide a wide range of social and community services and facilities*
- *To focus investment and resources in areas of greatest social need and thereby to minimise social exclusion*
- *To improve accessibility between home, work and facilities by promoting alternatives to car use including walking, cycling and public transport*

Economic Objectives:

- *To promote and facilitate the development and diversification of the County's economy in order to reduce unemployment and build on the existing potential*
- *To ensure that wise use is made of economic assets and resources including the land, the coast and buildings*
- *To protect and enhance the role, vitality and viability of the principal urban areas as employment, retail and service centres, accessible to all sections of the community*
- *To provide for tourism accommodation and facilities in a manner, which enhances the existing provision, and respects the rural and coastal environment*

- *To secure the efficient movement of people and goods within the County and between the County and the rest of the Country, the UK and Europe*

Environmental Objectives:

- *To protect and enhance the natural environment*
- *To protect and enhance the landscape, heritage and built environment*
- *To minimise the pollution of land, air and water and the production of waste*
- *To promote renewal and tackle existing degradation of resources*
- *To encourage wise stewardship and use of renewable and non-renewable resources*
- *To provide for a high standard of living and quality of life for the community including local amenity, health and safety*
- *To promote and facilitate high standards and quality of design in the built environment*

3.1.6 The spatial planning strategy is an important means by which the objectives of the Plan can be achieved. It seeks to establish:

- *The broad locations where change can be actively encouraged and accommodated or discouraged*
- *The physical form and scale this change should take*

3.1.7 The key challenges in this process are the maintenance of County Wexford's environmental qualities and distinctiveness while managing the use of environmental resources for the economic and social well-being of present and future generations.

3.1.8 The County Council's response to this challenge is to promote a balanced and equitable pattern of development based on the principle that urban and rural areas are interdependent and interrelated. Development should be on a scale appropriate to a particular area and to the needs of the local community. The

successful implementation of this strategy is dependent on the planned co-ordinated provision and use of physical and social infrastructure and the co-operation and support of other agencies and local communities.

3.1.9 There are a number of key issues to be considered in deciding on how balanced change and development are to be accommodated including:

- *The range of settlements and their different sizes and roles*
- *The various landscapes, rural resources, elements of the built environment and the land use patterns and constraints associated with them*
- *Key transport and communications corridors*
- *Significant gateways to the County*

3.1.10 Having regard to those issues, the County Council's strategy will be based on four interrelated elements:

- *The continued development and consolidation of the polycentric network of the four principal towns of Wexford, Enniscorthy, New Ross and Gorey as primary growth and service centres for their urban and rural communities, with the promotion of Wexford as a regional Gateway while protecting their character and setting*
- *The consolidation and revitalisation of the smaller towns and villages as important locations for local growth. and as important social and economic centres for their rural hinterlands; the identity and distinctiveness of these areas to be protected from inappropriate and/or overdevelopment*
- *The facilitation of an appropriate level of development in small villages and settlements and in the open countryside and coastal areas subject to the need to protect heritage resources and the landscape*
- *The continued development of the national roads as key transport corridors linking the main urban areas within the County, providing enhanced accessibility for rural communities, and providing vital linkages to the rest of Ireland, the United Kingdom and Europe*

3.1.11 This approach is in line with the desire to promote more sustainable development:

- *It will make optimum use of current and planned investment in infrastructure and reduce demand for unplanned uneconomic investment*
- *The distribution of development particularly housing in the main urban growth centres, will ensure critical mass for the development of enterprise and employment and the provision of services and facilities while helping to reduce urban sprawl*
- *The revitalisation of smaller towns and villages will benefit rural areas while contributing to a reduction in demand for dispersed rural housing*
- *It will help in promoting the wise use of rural assets and resources*
- *The development of key transport corridors will facilitate economic development in urban and rural areas, reduce rural isolation and offer the long term prospect of developing a viable and efficient public transport network*
- *The urban growth centre/Gateway concept has the potential to generate cluster type economic development based on the Wexford-Rosslare axis*

3.2 Urban Development Strategy – Wexford, Enniscorthy, New Ross, Gorey

3.2.1 The four towns of Wexford, Enniscorthy, New Ross and Gorey will play an important role in supporting more sustainable patterns of development in County Wexford in the future. These towns are major assets acting as housing, employment, retail, social, cultural and public administration centres serving their rural hinterlands. Their locations as gateways in the national road network provide a strategic framework for providing a balanced spread of development in the County and for investment in infrastructure. The future development of these towns into places where people will choose to live, work and relax is a key challenge facing the County Council.

3.2.2 In response to this challenge the County Council will seek to strengthen Wexford, Enniscorthy, New Ross and Gorey as key growth and services centres serving their own and surrounding rural communities:

- *Maximising their potential as self contained towns rather than as dormitories for other larger urban areas by developing employment and enterprise activities including indigenous industry and the attraction of foreign direct investment and by developing their retail, commercial and tourism roles; this approach is in accordance with the strategy in respect of rural towns embodied in the National Development Plan 2000 – 2006*
- *Promoting them as foci for house building because they provide more scope than smaller settlements to locate housing in proximity to a range of jobs, services and other facilities, as well as providing the greatest potential to serve development by public transport*
- *Protecting their settings through the control of edge of settlement development*
- *Improving their built environments to enhance their attraction as places to live and to open up economic opportunities for those living there*
- *Promoting an enhanced role for Wexford as a Gateway Town*

Benefits to the Community of Concentrating Development in Existing Towns

- Contributes to the renewal and regeneration of urban fabric and the reduction of dereliction
- Revitalises urban areas making them attractive locations in which to live
- Makes optimum use of existing investment in physical and social infrastructure
- Reduces car travel and commuting and encourages walking and cycling
- Helps reduce development pressures in rural areas by providing realistic alternatives to one-off housing
- Provides a range of house types
- Enables more efficient provision of services, including health, education, social services
- Helps create jobs

3.2.3 The growth and development of the towns will be guided and facilitated by a range of measures including:

- *Preparation, monitoring and review of Town and Environs Development Plans in conjunction with relevant urban Local Authorities. These plans will incorporate land use strategies for individual towns and their environs based on:*
 - *their capacity to accommodate growth*
 - *the supply and demand for zoned land*
 - *the provision of water and sewerage infrastructure*
 - *the capacity of the road network and transportation infrastructure*
 - *environmental constraints*

3.3 Rural Development Strategy (Small Towns and Villages)

3.3.1 The maintenance of the role, vitality, character and setting of the County's small towns and villages is central to the County Council's rural development strategy. The network of the towns and villages contributes to the County's diversity and gives the landscape its unique character. These local service centres will continue to evolve and change in meeting the social and economic needs of their communities. Their future development will be closely related to the needs of their individual communities on a scale compatible with each settlement's character.

3.3.2 The revitalisation, environmental and visual improvement of the towns and villages will make them attractive and convenient locations to accommodate rural housing needs. This in turn will reduce the pressure for housing development in rural areas and encourage a more sustainable pattern of urban living.

3.3.3 The communities living in these settlements have a significant role to play in sustaining the rural economy. The creation of more attractive environments

will help attract inward investment and will have a spin-off effect in the context of rural tourism. Several of these towns and villages are of particular importance because of their architectural and spatial character.

3.3.4 Some of the small towns and villages are beginning to experience development pressures which threaten their original identity and character and the quality of life of their residents. There is a need to ensure that these areas are not affected unacceptably by the location and scale of new housing development, in particular, and that they are not over developed. Other areas have suffered relative stagnation and decline and are in need of development to underpin their social and economic roles.

3.3.5 In support of it's aim of retaining and strengthening the rural community living in the small towns, villages and settlements, the County Council will:

- *provide necessary physical and social infrastructure*
- *promote the consolidation and enhancement of the character and identity of the towns and villages by upgrading amenities and facilities*
- *promote these areas as foci for house building to meet local need*
- *constrain the future growth and expansion of towns and villages which are in danger of exceeding their environmental and infrastructural capacities*
- *work to revitalise and regenerate those areas which are stagnating so as to ensure that they continue to contribute to the social and economic well being of their communities.*

3.3.6 In seeking to implement these policies, the County Council will rely on a range of measures and initiatives including:

- *preparation of Village Development Plans*
- *giving priority to the development of permanent housing over seasonally occupied housing, holiday or second homes.*

- *exercising a presumption in favour of development which involves the restoration and renewal of the urban fabric including:*
 - *infill development compatible with existing character*
 - *reuse of previously developed land, brownfield sites, including those on town and village outskirts*
 - *refurbishment, re-use and adaptation of old buildings*
 - *reuse of derelict and underused sites and buildings*
 - *backland development where both garden sizes and the space between the dwellings meet critical standards with regard to residential amenity, public health, traffic safety and general infrastructure.*
- *acquisition by agreement or compulsorily if necessary of undeveloped or derelict lands and making them available for development purposes*
- *providing for and encouraging compatible mixed use developments*
- *promoting and fostering a high standard of innovative design and layout, which reflects the town or village character, local tradition and human scale*
- *developing hierarchies of open spaces, landscape and amenity areas to provide links between towns, villages and rural areas including playing fields, woodlands, wildlife habitats, walking and cycling routes*
- *control of linear development on the approach roads to towns and villages*
- *encouraging and fostering community participation in local planning issues*
- *being proactive in implementing Town Renewal Plans and the programme for Urban and Village Renewal*

3.3.7 In order to give a sharper area specific focus to the overall spatial development strategy and to manage and guide new development, a series of village development plans are incorporated in the County Development Plan. These have to be prepared in recognition that:

- *development pressures will continue and in some instances intensify over the plan period*

- *too rapid large-scale expansion of settlements will have adverse impacts on their character, identity and setting, and the quality of life of local communities*
- *the scope for further development in many instances is constrained by the inadequacy in infrastructure provision*
- *revitalisation must be planned if optimum use is to be made of scarce resources*

Priority in the preparation of Village Plans has been given to those settlements which are experiencing greatest development pressures and where it is anticipated that these pressures will continue.

Village Development Plans

Village Plans are an effective means of applying the overall Spatial Development Strategy to particular areas. They deal with a range of issues including:

- Definition of development area/town/village envelopes.
- Identification of development objectives relating to housing, employment, amenity, heritage and infrastructure.
- Phasing of development with availability of infrastructure.
- Promoting mixed zones, brownfield sites, innovative designs.
- Controlling incremental expansion of housing.
- Promoting new development of an appropriate scale.
- Identifying priorities for schemes to relieve traffic and parking problems.
- Design guidance.
- Community involvement.

Implementation measures include:

- Land acquisition.
- Public/private partnerships.
- Specific works objectives.

3.3.8 While most of these towns and villages exhibit a range of settlement characteristics, services and facilities many have water and drainage infrastructure deficiencies. The County Council intends to provide the necessary infrastructure on a phased basis, with investment priority being given to the areas under the greatest pressure. Other measures including the Serviced Land Initiative and Public Private Partnership will be used in order to ensure that the Council’s development objectives are achieved.

3.3.9 It is an objective of the County Council to prepare town and village plans for the following areas;

Arthurstown	Carrig-on-Bannow	Ferns
Ballycanew	Castlebridge	Fethard
Ballyhack	Clonroche	Oilgate
Bridgetown	Curraclloe	Tagoat
Camolin	Duncannon	Taghmon

3.3.10 Development necessary to meet community needs, particularly for housing, may in some instances involve larger scale town or village expansions. Such development must be carried out in a coherent, phased manner and may require the preparation of an Action Area Plan. In assessing such proposals, regard will be had to a range of issues including:

- *the extent to which the development will meet identified local housing need*
- *it’s contribution to the achievement of balanced community development including social housing and affordable housing*
- *the extent to which it meets house type and density guidelines*
- *the adequacy and capacity of physical and social infrastructure in the area and of proposals/plans to redress deficiencies*
- *the feasibility and willingness of the developer to contribute towards the costs of providing infrastructure which would not be required if the particular development were not proposed; infrastructure includes provision of open space and landscaping*

- *the extent to which brownfield rather than greenfield sites will be used*
- *the impact of the development on the local topography and landscape*
- *the sensitivity with which the development is placed within the existing field pattern, hedgerows, and tree cover*
- *the quality and level of innovation in design and layout*
- *the extent to which the development will give rise to linear development and urban sprawl*
- *the importance and capacity to the road network serving the development*
- *assessment of overall costs and benefits to the community*
- *the necessity for Environmental Impact Assessment depending on scale and location*

3.3.11 Where new development is proposed in rural towns and villages the County Council will place particular emphasis on the need to give due regard to environmental considerations, good design and siting. All new developments must take full account of the need to protect the town and village environment so that present day demands and pressures do not compromise the ability of future residents to enjoy a high quality environment. All development must reflect the need to safeguard and improve the quality of life of residents, and protect and where possible and appropriate, enhance the essential character of environmental assets including:

- *setting, form and character*
- *buildings and areas of townscape, historic or architectural interest*
- *sites of archaeological importance*
- *open space and areas of recreation and amenity value*
- *the attractiveness and diversity of the local landscape*
- *areas/sites of nature conservation value*
- *the quality of streams, rivers and ground water*
- *public rights of way*

Chapter 4

Housing

Housing

- 4.1 The provision of housing has a particular relevance to a major principle of sustainable development, i.e., meeting the economic and social needs of people in a manner that does not degrade natural systems and placing special emphasis on the needs of the disadvantaged. The County Council is both the Planning and Housing Authority. In these dual roles it can influence the supply, scale and location of new housing which is critical in the achievement of balanced spatial development and ensure the highest standards in siting and design.
- 4.2 Through its housing strategy, the County Council seeks to:
- *cater for the community's housing needs having regard to economic resources, household composition and age structure.*
 - *ensure that each household can obtain a house of good standard in a high quality environment.*
 - *ensure that housing policies and objectives relate to the employment, environmental and infrastructure policies and objectives of the plan with the strategic aim of enhancing the quality of life of residents and the attractiveness of the towns, villages and rural areas.*
 - *encourage economy and efficiency in the use of land in order to keep down the real cost of housing.*
 - *discourage speculative development aimed at the second home and tourism market rather than meeting local need.*
 - *give priority to permanent residential development over seasonally occupied houses.*
 - *promote high standards of siting and design and the protection of the landscape.*

Housing in Towns and Villages

4.3 The accommodation of housing in the towns and villages will be a key policy priority in the implementation of the housing strategy. In support of this policy the County Council will:

- *identify lands suitable for residential development through the preparation of Town and Village Plans.*
- *continue to implement the water and sewerage services investment programme to improve and extend physical infrastructure.*
- *facilitate development on the basis of interim and temporary arrangements for water and sewerage services pending provision of permanent infrastructure and to co-operate with private developers in this regard.*
- *require developers to contribute towards the cost of providing necessary physical and social infrastructure in housing areas.*
- *enter into public/private partnership arrangements for the provision of infrastructure.*
- *be proactive in implementing the Serviced Land Initiative.*
- *enter into joint venture partnerships with the private and voluntary sectors, housing associations and co-operatives for the provision of housing.*
- *utilise existing land resources and purchase additional lands for the provision of fully serviced sites to facilitate the Builder Under Licence Scheme and other suitable schemes.*
- *establish land banks and become involved in land assembly for public/private and voluntary sector initiatives.*
- *acquire derelict or underdeveloped sites and properties and develop these as housing units or serviced sites.*
- *encourage and have a presumption in favour of development which involves the refurbishment and rehabilitation of derelict dwelling houses.*

Housing in Town and Village Plans

Lands suitable for housing development are identified in Town, Environs and Village Development Plans. Adequate amounts are zoned to allow for:

- *the probability that not all zoned land will be made available for development.*
- *the need to provide for greater flexibility and choice.*
- *the need to ensure an adequate supply of land to help moderate land prices.*

- *consider increasing standard development levies for holiday/second home developments and use these additional funds to finance the range of initiatives set out above.*
- *promote and co-operate proactively with the Town Renewal Scheme and the Urban and Village Renewal Programme.*

Social And Affordable Housing

- 4.4 Increasing social housing output is identified as a key priority in the National Development Plan 2000 – 2006. It is intended that this approach will involve a range of resources including the local authority housing programme, the expansion of voluntary housing activity, the provision of affordable housing by the local authority and the continuation of the Shared Ownership Scheme.
- 4.5 The County Council will continue to meet social housing needs in towns, villages and rural areas in a balanced way throughout the County avoiding over concentration in a limited number of areas. The emphasis will be on well designed and integrated schemes appropriate to the scale and character of the particular settlement. In the interests of achieving more balanced communities, the County Council will seek closer integration and linkages between social and private residential development.
- 4.6 The need to provide a range of affordable housing for households of varying sizes will be a key priority in the implementation of the social housing programme.
- 4.7 The County Council recognises the important role played by the voluntary sector in meeting social housing need and will support and facilitate the expansion of that role.
- 4.8 The County Council will be proactive in meeting social housing need by:

- *undertaking a housing construction programme.*
- *assembling land banks.*
- *co-operating with and assisting the private and voluntary sectors.*
- *implementing the Affordable Housing and Shared Ownership Schemes.*
- *encouraging and facilitating the take up of the range of housing options available under the Social Housing Programme.*
- *having regard to the “Social Housing Guidelines – Site Selection”, Department of the Environment and to the County Council’s Design Guide for Residential Areas.*
- *developing a programme of environmental improvements in social housing developments.*
- *encouraging resident involvement and participation in housing development and implementing an estate management policy.*

The Travelling Community

- 4.9 The County Council recognises the distinctive culture, lifestyle and requirements of the travelling community. It will implement measures in accordance with National Policy to meet the community’s accommodation needs. This will include the provision and extension of halting sites, purpose designed group housing and housing in local authority schemes. The County Council will seek the integration of new accommodation with local settlements and communities. New sites will be well related to local services and facilities. Accommodation will be distributed throughout the County based on local need. Site size will be kept to a minimum and will be designed to provide a high level of amenity. The successful implementation of this policy is dependent on the understanding and support of local communities. The County Council will take steps to ensure that meaningful consultation takes place in this regard. Resources will be made available through the National Development Plan to meet the accommodation needs of travellers. In meeting the future and projected accommodation needs of the travelling community, the County Council will:

- *Implement the **Traveller Accommodation Programme** in accordance with the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act, 1998.*
- *provide for traveller accommodation in halting sites, individual dwellings or in group housing schemes for travellers who normally reside in County Wexford and who require such accommodation.*
- *consult with travellers and their representative organisations and with the local settled community in relation to the siting, planning and design of prospective halting sites or group housing schemes.*
- *provide and manage halting sites in a manner compatible with the local environment and the needs of the travelling community. (In general it will be policy to set up management plans in co-operation with traveller families to manage halting sites provided by the local authority). Any area zoned for residential development is deemed to be suitable for a halting site development; such developments will be subject to the detailed design standards as outlined in the **Department of the Environment's Guidelines for Residential Caravan Parks for Travellers (Oct., 1997)**, and normal development control standards.*

Housing and Special Needs

4.10 In support of it's policy on reducing social exclusion, the County Council will require that the special needs of various groups are taken into account when development is proposed. In particular, the Council will ensure that the needs and requirements of people with disabilities, the elderly, children and refugees are fully catered for in the supply, design and layout of residential development, including infill development and extensions by:

- *requiring designers and developers to have regard to:*
 - *the Building Regulations, 1997*
 - *Access for the Disabled – Minimum Design Criteria, National Rehabilitation Board*
 - *Buildings for Everyone – Access and Use for all the Citizens, National Rehabilitation Board.*

- *making budgetary provision for carrying out improvements to footpaths, removal of obstacles, and other measures to facilitate people with disabilities.*
- *having regard to the advice and guidance which may be published from time to time.*

Residential Density

4.11 The commitment to sustainable development implies an increase in residential densities in appropriate locations. National planning guidance also requires the achievement of higher densities consistent with the maintenance of quality residential environments. The County Council intends to adopt a flexible approach in the matter of residential density and not to specify rigid minimum and maximum standards. The emphasis will be on quality, innovation and a design led approach with proposals appropriate to each site and location. The aim is to make the most efficient use of land and infrastructure, to avoid town and village cramming and over-development and to protect urban greenspaces and the quality of life. While the emphasis will be towards appropriate and reasonable higher densities, the County Council recognises the need for lower densities in some areas. Higher land costs have discouraged quality, low density housing in urban areas resulting in growing pressure for such housing in rural areas.

4.12 In providing for a range of residential densities, consistent with the need to ensure high quality residential environments, the County Council will:

- *have regard to “Residential Density – Guidelines for Planning Authorities”, Department of the Environment and Local Government, September, 1999.*
- *prepare a Design Guide for Residential Areas.*
- *Adopt a flexible approach in the matter of residential density and avoid the rigid specification of minimum and maximum density standards. The*

approach will focus on quality and innovation to achieve attractive living environments.

- *Recognise the need for lower densities in appropriate areas.*

Housing Balance

- 4.13 The achievement of a range of house types, sizes and tenures will help in creating more balanced community development and in tackling social exclusion and polarisation. The aim is to facilitate housing provision for amongst others, first time buyers, poorer families and people with special needs by the provision of lower cost housing.

In seeking to achieve this aim the County Council will:

- *encourage a variety of house types, sizes and tenures in all new residential developments, including holiday home developments, to provide variety and interest and to facilitate social mix.*

Residential Design and Layout

- 4.14 The achievement of high quality, innovative, safe and pleasant residential environments is a key objective of the County Council and will be pursued in co-operation with designers, developers and local communities. Preference will be given to small cluster type developments linked by generous green spaces rather than to large suburban layouts unsuited to rural County Wexford. The County Council will seek to ensure that new housing development is well integrated with the form and framework of the town or village. New housing development will be required to meet the following criteria:

- *it is of a scale and layout appropriate to the size and form of the town and village.*

- *it is of a design, which is sympathetic to the character of the area and avoids the adverse effects of over development.*
- *it achieves a density compatible with the surrounding environment and the guidelines of the Planning Authority.*
- *it will not have an adverse impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties or its immediate surroundings.*
- *it will not have an adverse impact on areas or buildings of historic or architectural interest, or on sites of nature conservation or archaeological importance.*
- *it will provide attractive conditions for walking and cycling with linkages to adjoining residential areas, town or village centres, amenities and open space areas.*
- *it will provide for adequate functional open space areas linked to adjoining open space areas, where practical.*
- *it will not create traffic hazards..*

4.15 To assist in the achievement of high quality residential development the County Council will:

- *prepare a Design Guide for Residential Areas elaborating on and providing a more qualitative emphasis to the Residential Estate Development Standards set out in paragraph 4.24 of this plan.*
- *prepare, in consultation with designers and developers, Residential Site Design Statements for particular sites setting out the main considerations, design principles and quality objectives which a proposed development should address including:*
 - *identification of areas which should remain undeveloped*
 - *key views and prospects to be protected*
 - *access points and linkages to other areas*
 - *details of densities, building heights and lines, materials and colours*
 - *advice on how to maximise opportunities presented by existing*

landscape features, groups of trees, hedgerows, streams and topography

Conservation of Housing Stock

- 4.16 The conservation, re-use and recycling of the community's existing housing stock accords with the principles of sustainability. Suitable environmental improvements in existing run-down residential areas will be initiated and appropriate refurbishment encouraged.

In support of conserving the existing housing stock the County Council will:

- *discourage the loss of any habitable dwelling through neglect or inappropriate change of use.*
- *encourage and facilitate the improvement and upgrading of the existing housing stock through renovation and refurbishment.*

Infill Housing

- 4.17 Well-designed and integrated infill housing will be encouraged for its role in the social and environmental revitalisation of towns and villages. Opportunities for infilling may also be available on the edges of settlements and in backland areas where unco-ordinated, piecemeal development has taken place hitherto. In some instances, it may be possible to relax normal planning standards, e.g. car parking, and reduce planning contributions in order to encourage such development where there is clear planning gain for the community. Each case will be considered on its merits.
- 4.18 The County Council will encourage and facilitate infill housing development including the redevelopment of vacant, derelict or underused sites. Applicants and developers will be required to have regard to the following guidelines in preparing development proposals:

- *the design must be in sympathy with the existing character of the area in terms of density and details such as window types, heights, materials, finishes, building lines and roof pitches.*
- *the development should incorporate an acceptable element of private open space for amenity use; where this is not possible, the developer may be required to contribute towards the cost of provision of new or improvements to existing open space in the vicinity.*
- *sufficient space should be provided to accommodate bin, fuel and other household storage.*

Apartments

- 4.19 Apartment developments have a role to play in meeting the accommodation needs of the young, mobile sectors of the community, small households and as tourist accommodation. The County Council will adopt a positive attitude to such developments particularly in the larger towns provided they are compatible with surrounding areas, would not give rise to adverse impacts on the amenities of adjoining properties or on areas or structures of historic or architectural interest and can be provided with adequate car parking facilities.

Use of Upper Floors for Residential Purposes

- 4.20 The unused upper floors of premises in towns and villages provide a valuable accommodation resource. Their use for living purposes would contribute to the revitalisation of urban areas. The County Council will promote and encourage the utilisation of upper floor space in towns and villages for residential purposes.

House Extensions

- 4.21 Extending existing dwelling houses to meet changing family needs is an acceptable form of development which is viewed positively by the County Council. Development proposals should have regard to the following:
- *the size of the extension should be in proportion to the size of the existing house and houses in the vicinity.*
 - *the design should be in harmony with that of the existing house and the general architectural character of the area.*
 - *the development should not have an adverse impact on the amenities of adjoining properties*
 - *site coverage should be carefully considered to avoid unacceptable loss of private open space or encroachment on wastewater treatment infrastructure.*

Backland Development

- 4.22 Piecemeal and uncoordinated development of backlands, including the construction of extra dwellings in former back gardens may result in inappropriate and disorderly development and can have an adverse effect on the residential amenity of adjoining properties. This may also result in the overloading of infrastructure and in missed opportunities for integrated renewal. In the event that a large plot of land, located in a backlands location, is the subject of a development proposal, an indicative layout of the overall development intentions for the land will be required.

Backland development will be allowed subject to normal planning requirements i.e. where both garden sizes and the space between dwellings meet critical standards with regard to residential amenity, public health, traffic safety and general infrastructure.

Cluster Development and Other Small Scale Housing Developments

- 4.23 Cluster type development in rural areas will generally consist of a group of between two and five houses on a definable plot with suitable and adequate infrastructure and services. The cluster layout should reflect what is appropriate to the site. Consideration will be given to servicing by means of communal wastewater treatment systems in appropriate circumstances.

Small scale housing development, of an appropriate scale and on a definable plot with communal infrastructure and services, will be considered in urban, small town and village locations (as outlined rear of this appendix, entitled 'List of Villages'). Consideration will be given to servicing by means of communal wastewater treatment systems in appropriate circumstances.

Residential Estate Development Standards

- 4.24 Residential estates or multiple developments will be favoured within existing settlements. The following although not exhaustive, sets out generally the requirements of the County Council in relation to these developments. The provisions of this section will apply also to holiday home developments although permanent residences which contribute positively to their environs on a year round basis shall be favoured. All new residential estates should form a unified concept and relate to the existing town/village in which they are situated.

Layout

- *Innovation in the layout of residential estates will be encouraged; the overriding factor in the determination of planning applications will be the*

overall quality of the estate in terms of residential amenity and environmental sustainability.

- *An informal layout, which gives priority to the pedestrian, will be encouraged. This can be achieved in smaller developments through shared surfaces for pedestrians and vehicles. Well-lit pedestrian links, separate from the main carriageways should be provided within the estate. These links should be overlooked as far as possible by dwellings and right angled bends avoided for security.*
- *Long straight roads will not be permitted in residential estate development. Estate roads should incorporate gentle curves and any one cul-de-sac should not serve more than 20 dwellings. Physical traffic calming measures within the estate should be included at the planning application stage.*
- *Variety in the building line of cul-de-sacs will be encouraged.*
- *The provision of services and roads layout of the development must have regard to **Recommendations for Site Development Works for Housing Areas**, Department of the Environment and Local Government.*
- *Provision should be made where appropriate for cycle routes, both within the estate and also to nearby amenities.*
- *The development of courtyards will be encouraged in housing developments with the area enclosed by surrounding buildings. Courtyards should be suitably landscaped, both hard and soft, to provide amenity for dwellings overlooking this area.*
- *A minimum distance of 2.3 metres should be provided between the side walls of the dwellings in the estate.*
- *The developer should endeavour as far as possible to underground existing overhead powerlines and to re-route them away from the dwellings where possible.*

Density

Strict adherence to maximum and minimum density standards is not recommended. Regard should be had to “**Residential Density – Guidelines**

for Planning Authorities”, Department of the Environment and Local Government, September, 1999. The emphasis should be on providing quality housing environments based on innovation and a design led approach.

Design

- *The design of dwellings in residential estates should bear a relationship to the nature, scale and form of the existing built fabric within the settlement. Any proposals for modern developments must be in **harmony** with existing dwellings and the surrounding built environment. A variety of dwelling types, sizes and designs will be encouraged.*
- *The County Council will require a pitch of between 30 and 45 degrees on domestic dwelling houses. Roof slates/tiles of black, blue/black or grey will be favoured. Dormer windows and velux roof lights will be considered where appropriate.*
- *Large picture windows should be avoided. Where larger windows are desired, they will be received more favourably as two vertical emphasis windows with a separating column.*
- *Outline applications for residential estates in which each site will be developed independently must be accompanied by a design brief for the overall development. Each subsequent dwelling submitted for approval must have regard to that design brief.*

Landscaping

- *A detailed landscaping plan must be prepared as an integral part of the overall development of the estate and submitted as part of the planning application for the development.*
- *Planting will need to be carefully considered in communal areas. Regard should be had to the growth rate of the species and also to the level of maintenance required for the landscaping.*
- *The developer will be responsible for the laying out and planting of all landscaped areas.*

Public Open Space Areas

- *Functional open space areas should be provided at a rate of 10% of the total site area or 1 hectare per 150 dwellings, whichever is the greater.*
- *The above figure may vary according to the quality of the open space and the density of the overall development. Financial contributions may be accepted where it can be demonstrated that sufficient amenity has been provided for the estate through an existing amenity/park in the vicinity.*
- *Open space should be graded from large areas of open spaces to small play areas and incidental open spaces throughout the estate.*
- *Hard landscaping should be provided where appropriate, to accommodate desire lines through open spaces and also to facilitate the use of open space year round.*
- *Public open space areas should be provided with an optimal amount of surveillance from dwellings within the estate.*
- *Open space areas should retain where possible, existing site features including mature trees. Where such a feature is to be retained, provision should be made for its protection during construction.*

Private Open Space Areas

- *An adequate amount of private open space should be provided within the curtilage of each dwelling. This shall consist of a minimum area of 60 – 75 m² depending on house type.*
- *Emphasis will be placed on the quality of the open space which should be free from overlooking and have adequate amounts of day lighting thereon.*
- *The proportions of this private open space may vary although a distance of 22m shall generally be observed between opposing first floor windows.*
- *The boundaries of rear gardens should generally be provided with a permanent durable barrier 1.4 metres in height. Where rear gardens back onto public areas, excluding a public roadway, this height should be increased to 1.8 metres.*

Chapter 5

Rural Development

Rural Development

5.1 County Wexford is a predominantly rural county. The County's rural areas have been undergoing significant development changes resulting from:

- *changing agricultural practices and structures*
- *urban dispersal pressures particularly for one-off housing*
- *tourism and recreation*
- *demand for new infrastructure developments including wind farms and telecommunications masts*
- *coastal erosion*

5.2 Increasing development pressures threaten the integrity of the natural resource base including agriculture, water and scenic landscapes which are essential for the continuance and prosperity of the rural community. The long term cumulative impacts of unplanned, sporadic urban generated development including threats to the quality of ground water, uneconomic extension of infrastructure and services, visual impacts of more structures on the landscape and loss of habitat are of particular concern.

5.3 The County Council recognises the need to manage rural change and control development so as to:

- *sustain the rural character of the countryside as a valuable resource and to ensure the continuing viability of agriculture as essential to the management of that resource*
- *maintain a vibrant self-sustaining and working rural community*
- *achieve a more sustainable pattern of rural development including maintaining the overall strength of the rural community*
- *accommodate the social and economic needs of the majority of rural dwellers*

National Policy on Rural Development

Key objectives of national policy as outlined in the National Development Plan 2000 – 2006 include:

- *the maintenance of the rural population both in aggregate numbers and in a balanced spatial distribution*
- *ensuring the economic and social well being of rural communities and tackling rural poverty*
- *providing the conditions for a meaningful and fulfilling life for people living in rural areas*
- *the achievement of vibrant sustainable rural communities where individuals and families have a choice as to whether to stay in, leave or move to rural Ireland.*

who are neither farmers nor dependent on farming or other natural resource based industries for their livelihood thereby promoting a broad concept of rural development

5.4 In seeking to achieve these policy objectives, the County Council will:

- *continue to provide on a planned, phased basis the necessary environmental and transport infrastructure to support rural living and working*
- *improve the quality of the built environment in rural towns and villages in terms of their attractiveness as places in which to live and work and as locations for industrial, services and tourism investment*
- *constrain housing development in those areas of open countryside which are subject to the most intense urban generated pressures including pressure from adjoining counties*
- *constrain the growth of small towns, villages and settlements which are experiencing pressures for large scale housing and tourism development and where necessary infrastructure provision is deficient*
- *protect and improve high amenity areas and limit development in these areas to those intending to reside there as permanent residents*
- *ensure that new development does not adversely impinge on vulnerable and sensitive landscapes*
- *foster and facilitate rural community projects particularly related to rural diversification*
- *promote rural tourism*
- *promote the restoration and re-use of vernacular buildings for suitable rural enterprise projects*
- *support small scale, environmentally sensitive enterprise projects in no longer needed farm and rural buildings*
- *encourage the utilisation of environmental resources to foster economic development by expanding rural tourism, sustaining the fishing industry, developing renewable energy sources, promoting agri-environment measures and planting new woodlands*

- *encourage the use of I.T./teleworking/e-commerce to combat the disadvantage of remoteness and to advance diversification*
- *continue to monitor urban and rural housing development trends to guard against the emergence of long term unsustainable patterns of development.*

Development of Natural Resources

- 5.5 While the majority of rural dwellers are not dependent for employment on the use of natural resources, the development of agriculture in particular and to a lesser extent forestry and fisheries will continue to play an important role in the rural economy. The County Council supports and will facilitate the sustainable development of all of these sectors for the benefit of the County.

Investment in Rural Areas

The National Development Plan provides over £8.5b. for the support of investment in industry, agriculture, forestry, fisheries and tourism. This includes substantial support to the agriculture sector under the CAP Rural Development Programme.

Agriculture

- 5.6 The County Council recognises the importance of agriculture for sustaining, enhancing and maintaining the rural economy and culture. The County Council will support and facilitate agricultural restructuring and diversification within the framework of **Agenda 2000** in order to integrate the sector more closely with rural development, in pursuit of environmental and social objectives. This approach accords with national policy as set out in the **National Sustainable Development Strategy**. The County Council supports the emphasis in the **National Development Plan 2000 – 2006** on investment on measures for improving farm structures, including farm waste management, animal welfare, food quality and environmental protection, complementing the substantial investment in REPS. The optimum and environmentally sensitive use of land no longer required for agriculture will be a key issue over the plan period particularly with regard to development in

coastal areas. In support of the development of efficient and sustainable agriculture, the County Council will:

- *promote environmentally friendly systems of agricultural production and processing through the continuation of control of farmyard pollution and REPS*
- *support and facilitate farmers who wish to upgrade their facilities to meet market and environmental requirements*
- *encourage and facilitate farm and rural diversification including the development of rural tourism and organic farming*
- *co-operate with and be proactive with regard to proposals from the Rural Development Programme and the Rural Development Fund in generating opportunities for off-farm employment*
- *require high standards in the design and maintenance of agricultural structures*
- *encourage persons choosing to reside in the rural area to accept normal agricultural practices*

5.7 In assessing applications for permission for agricultural development, the County Council will have regard to:

- *‘Guidelines and Recommendations on the Control of Pollution from Farmyard Wastes’, published by the Department of Agriculture and Food and other appropriate guidance which may be published from time to time*
- *‘Farm Buildings and the Environment’ published by An Foras Taluntais’*
- *the Council’s Aquifer Protection Policy and Nutrient Management Plans*
- *the arrangement of structures and buildings in the context of the overall farm complex which should be designed to minimise visual impact on the landscape*
- *screening and landscaping proposals which should consist of indigenous trees and shrubs*

- *finishes and colours of buildings which should reflect adjoining farm buildings and be chosen to minimise visual impact on the landscape*

Forestry

5.8 Forests and woodlands are a natural resource which can provide commercial, recreational, environmental, amenity and aesthetic benefits. There is considerable potential to develop this sector in County Wexford from its current low base. The County Council recognises the importance of forestry, its value added potential, and the opportunities it offers for on-farm diversification. The County will participate in the nationally projected growth of the sector and will be guided in this by an Indicative Forestry Strategy.

5.9 In seeking to develop sustainable forestry the County Council will:

- *prepare an Indicative Forestry Strategy and have regard to this Strategy in exercising it's development control functions and in consultation with the Forestry Service*
- *encourage a diversity of species in afforestation proposals and in particular to require a proportion of all new forestry development to consist of native hardwood species in order to extend the range of potential end uses and to reduce the potential for adverse impact on the landscape resulting from monoculture*
- *ensure that all forestry developments are compatible with the environment and that good forest management is implemented*
- *encourage the establishment of primary, secondary and tertiary forest based processing industries*

Forestry Development

The Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry have published 'A **Strategic Plan For The Development of The Forestry Sector In Ireland**' 1996. The Plan's objectives include:

- *A target of two and a half fold increase in the area forested over a thirty year period*
- *To develop forestry to a scale and in a manner which maximises its contribution to national economic and social well-being on a sustainable basis and which is compatible with the protection of the environment.*

Indicative Forestry Strategy

An Indicative Forestry Strategy will be adopted by Wexford County Council. The Strategy will identify areas of opportunity for the creation of new forests and areas environmentally sensitive to afforestation. It will provide the context within which consultations on forestry applications will be assessed.

- *encourage the development of integrated farm forestry*
- *encourage public access to forests for amenity and recreation purposes and the development of amenity forestry projects of local social and economic benefit*
- *require developers to have regard to the ‘Forestry and Archaeology, Fisheries and Landscape Guidelines’ published by the Forest Service*
- *have regard to the ‘Forestry Development – Guidelines for Planning Authorities’ published by the Department of the Environment and Local Government*
- *protect trees and woodlands from ongoing loss caused by inappropriate development*
- *preserve and enhance scenic amenity woodland and forestry areas which contribute to overall landscape character*
- *enter into discussions with Coillte with regard to planting of trees in proximity to water resources which contribute to public water supplies.*

Fishing

- 5.10 The sea and inland waters are natural assets which are invaluable not only from a fisheries perspective but also as tourism and environmental resources. The Council recognises that it is imperative that these resources are safeguarded in a sustainable manner for present and future generations of County Wexford and the wider international community. In this context the Council will seek to maintain a clean aquatic environment as fundamental to the sustainability of the fisheries resource by means of water quality objectives and standards. At the same time the Council’s aim is to maximise the long term contribution of the sea fishing sector and inland fisheries to the County’s economy and to the maintenance of the social fabric of coastal communities.
- 5.11 The River Slaney is a designated water under the European Communities (Quality of Salmonid Waters) Regulations 1978 and one of the few remaining spring salmon rivers in Ireland. The Council recognises the fishing status of

the Slaney and its tributaries and the contribution it can make to tourism. The Slaney Valley is a candidate Special Area of Conservation and supports several species listed in the European Habitats Directive. As such the River Slaney is not only of national conservation significance, but has now been included in European legislation.

5.12 In support of the development of the fisheries sector and in resource protection, the Council will:

- encourage the further development of the aquaculture industry at appropriate locations, having regard to existing and proposed designations for environmental and habitat protection.
- encourage fishing and aquaculture developments that are compatible with existing land/coastal uses such as tourism, amenity and recreation.
- support the development of the processing sector and value added products along with the development of tourism including sea fishing and sea food restaurants.
- support the development of inland fisheries as an important recreational and tourism activity in the rural economy and investigate the development of freshwater aquaculture on the Slaney and Barrow Rivers.
- prepare action plans/management strategies for the Slaney Valley and River Barrow catchments.

Rural Housing

5.13 There is increasing pressure in the County for one-off scattered rural housing development resulting from demographic change, economic prosperity, increased accessibility and mobility and the more restrictive rural housing policies of adjoining counties. This pressure is not uniform throughout the County. It is concentrated within three to four miles of the principal towns, on the approach roads to smaller towns and villages and in coastal areas. The County Council recognises the need to keep to a minimum, pockets of fragmented suburban scale linear development in order to:

- *pre-empt demands for ad-hoc investment in infrastructure which would be inconsistent with strategic investment programmes.*
- *safeguard the countryside from encroachment and protect the settings of towns and villages.*
- *secure the consolidation of towns and villages by making optimum use of existing and planned investment in infrastructure and assisting in urban regeneration by encouraging development on brownfield sites.*
- *protect scenic landscapes and the natural environment and resources as important elements of rural character which underpin rural development, particularly tourism.*

5.14 The County Council is committed to the maintenance and growth of strong rural communities living in towns, villages, settlements and in the open countryside and to facilitate and support this through its rural investment programmes, policies and objectives.

5.15 In meeting this commitment the County Council recognises the need to permit the development of rural housing in locations, on a scale and at a pace which will not diminish County Wexford's high quality, relatively unspoilt rural environment and distinctive spatial character. The County Council's aim is not to prohibit the development of rural housing but to:

- *minimise the amount of sporadic speculative development which should more appropriately be located on serviced lands in towns and villages:*

5.16 In general one-off housing will not be permitted in the open countryside with the exception to this being:

- Single rural houses and clusters provided that such properties are occupied as the owners permanent place of residence and subject to complying with all other appropriate planning requirements. The applicant for full planning permission or the applicant for Permission Consequent to Outline Permission must be the intended owner and

first occupier of the house. The applicant shall not be favourably considered for any similar application for residential property, on any unzoned land in the County, for a period of ten years. Wexford County Council can mitigate in exceptional circumstances.

- 5.17 All planning permissions granted for housing on unzoned land, with the exception of development referred to in Section 5.17.1, shall be subject to an occupancy condition, pursuant to Section 47 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, restricting the use of the dwelling to the applicant (or in the case of Outline Planning Permission for individual or cluster developments a condition will be attached stating that the application for Permission Consequent to Outline planning Permission will require applicants to sign a Section 47 agreement restricting the use of the dwelling) and their family, as a place of permanent residence. The period of occupancy shall be for a minimum period of five years from the date of the first occupation. Any subsequent owner of the property shall not be favourably considered for planning permission by the planning authority for residential property on any unzoned land, until the expiry of the initial ten year period referred to in section 5.16. The dwelling must be occupied as the subsequent owners place of permanent residence.

The planning authority will include a condition on all such residences restricting the continued use of the dwelling to use as a permanent-primary residence.

- 5.17.1 The requirement that an applicant be a permanent resident of a dwelling and enter into an Occupancy Agreement shall not apply in the four towns, and in and adjacent to the core of existing villages on the list of villages contained at the rear of this appendix entitled 'List of Villages'. The scale of development in the villages will depend on the existing scale of the village and the level of social and other infrastructures available.

Areas With Visually Vulnerable and Sensitive Landscapes

- 5.18 There are areas of high scenic amenity value with very limited capacity to absorb development without detracting from their overall landscape character. These areas are indicated on the Map Nos. 3 (Landscape Policy Areas) & 4 (Coastal Development Policy Areas). Development within these areas will be guided by the Landscape Protection and Coastal Development policies set out in Sections 8.5 and 8.6. The policies and requirements with respect to development of rural housing identified for Rural Housing Policy Area 1 will also apply to these areas. In addition, the onus will be on the applicant/developer to show that a development proposal will not detract from the character of the landscape or diminish or detract from views and prospects along Scenic Routes.

Replacement Dwellings

- 5.19 Replacement dwellings will be considered and the replacement of existing derelict dwellings, where walls are standing, will be allowed subject to compliance with required public health and traffic safety standards. An occupancy condition, in accordance with the Planning & Development Act, 2000, shall be attached in instances where the subject property has not been occupied within the last ten years.

The Council will encourage the renovation, conversion and reuse of existing derelict, though intact, rural properties as residential accommodation. Development of this nature will not attract an occupancy condition.

The planning authority will favour the renovation and reuse of old dwellings and in particular farmyard clusters, and will only consider the demolition and replacement of such structures in exceptional circumstances.

- 5.20 All applications for rural housing will be evaluated and assessed against a range of planning and environmental criteria, standards and requirements including:

- *the degree to which the development will give rise to haphazard linear development.*
- *the visual impact of the development on the area in terms of size, height, bulk, scale, materials used, landscaping and screening, orientation and its relationship with existing developments in the area; the **Rural Housing Design Code for County Wexford** should be referred to in this context.(See Paragraphs 5.22 and 5.23)*
- *the adequacy and suitability of water and wastewater infrastructure.*
- *impact on ground water sources/Aquifer Protection Policy.*
- *traffic safety.*
- *impacts on natural and man made heritage.*

Particular site specific difficulties may warrant a refusal of permission since the County Council has to consider the details of a proposed development as well as its acceptability in principle.

Wastewater Treatment and Disposal

5.21 Rural houses will normally require the installation of wastewater treatment and disposal systems. The suitability of ground conditions will be a major consideration in the assessment of these systems. The County Council will implement a monitoring programme to ensure that septic tank drainage systems and wastewater treatment systems are properly installed and maintained and that all relevant planning conditions are fully complied with.

- **Standard Septic Tank Drainage Systems**

To be acceptable the following requirements must be adhered to:

- *ground conditions must be suitable for the installation of the system and for subsoil percolation.*
- *compliance with “Recommendations for Septic Tank Drainage System for Single Houses”, Eolas SR6:1991 or in “Treatment Systems for*

Single Houses” (Wastewater Treatment Manuals) Environmental Protection Agency 2000, when this becomes operational.

- *submission of a detailed Site Suitability Report prepared by a competent and qualified person with each application.*
- *the applicant will be required to enter into a septic tank maintenance agreement in respect of the annual servicing and maintenance of the system. The name of the person or persons responsible for this work will be notified to the County Council.*

- **Proprietary Wastewater Treatment Systems**

These systems are generally acceptable provided the following requirements are adhered to:

- *ground conditions must be suitable for the installation of the system and for percolation.*
- *compliance with the requirements and standards set out in “Treatment Systems for Small Communities, Business, Leisure Centres and Hotels” (Wastewater Treatment Manuals) Environmental Protection Agency 2000 when this becomes operational.*
- *submission of a detailed Site Suitability Report prepared by a competent and qualified person to include details of the final disposal route for treated effluent.*
- *the system is installed and maintained in accordance with the manufacturers specifications.*
- *grease traps are installed.*
- *the applicant will be required to enter into a wastewater treatment system maintenance agreement in respect of the annual servicing and maintenance of the system. The name of the person or persons responsible for this work will be notified to the County Council.*

Rural Housing Design Code

5.22 Choosing a Site

- A site should be capable of accommodating:
 - *a dwellinghouse so that it blends into the landscape, is not visually prominent and does not detract from or diminish scenic views or prospects.*
 - *a wastewater treatment system **within** the boundaries of the site, without being a pollution risk to ground water or any watercourse; generally a minimum site area of 2,000sq. m. (0.5 acre) is required.*
- *an entrance without causing difficulties or road traffic hazard for house occupants or the general public.*
- *in the absence of a public water supply, an adequate and potable water supply must be provided.*

5.23 Site Analysis

- *a site analysis should be prepared in advance of the design of the dwellinghouse and preparation of the site layout plan. The purpose of this analysis is to:*
 - *record and evaluate information on the site and its surroundings.*
 - *identify and evaluate design constraints and opportunities presented by the site*
 - *.influence the design of the development to provide a good quality living environment which respects, acknowledges and enhances landscape character.*
- *A site analysis should include plans and sketches drawn to scale to accurately show:*

In relation to the site

- *orientation and slope*
 - *trees and other significant vegetation*
 - *buildings*
 - *access points*
 - *drainage and services*
 - *fences, boundaries and easements*
 - *any notable features or characteristics of the site*
 - *any artefacts or features of historic/archaeological importance*
 - *watercourses*
-

In relation to the surrounding area

- *the location and use of surrounding buildings*
 - *the difference in levels between the site and surrounding properties and where applicable, the level of the public road*
 - *the built form, scale and character of surrounding and nearby development, including characteristic fencing and garden styles*
 - *site frontage features such as poles and footpaths*
 - *direction and distances to local shops/services*
-

The design response *must explain how the design and layout:*

- *derives from the site analysis*
 - *relates to any other dwellings on the site and to the surrounding land and development*
 - *respects, acknowledges and improves the existing rural character*
-

General Design Considerations

- *The County Council wishes to avoid being over prescriptive in terms of design detail, concentrating instead on the broad issues of scale, density,*

height, massing, landscaping, access and road frontage , and the visual relationship likely to be established with other properties in the vicinity. The intention is to ensure that a development is aware of and respects its context and surroundings. The Council will encourage both variety and good quality house design. Single storey, dormers and two storey houses will be given consideration, with all applications to be based on the merit of design and the appropriateness of the house to the site in question.

- *Roadside boundary ditches, hedgerows, stone piers, stone walls and other traditional materials in rural areas should generally be retained and reinforced. While it is recognised that some realignment of existing roadside boundaries maybe necessary to facilitate development proposals, the removal of excessive tracts of existing natural vegetation and/or traditional roadside boundaries e.g. stone walls will be discouraged. Where necessary in terms of traffic safety and possible in horticultural terms and acceptable in terms of traffic safety the existing hedgerow shall be altered/relocated and not removed. Where it is necessary and acceptable to remove the hedgerow to provide adequate sightlines, the new boundary should be comprised of a earthen/sod/stone embankment/wall planted with native tress and hedgerow species.*
- *In areas which have experienced development pressure and in the more densely built up areas, development should be guided into coherent patterns by the way houses relate to each other and by making understandable groupings of houses.*
- *Unbroken lines of roadside houses, with competing house-styles and boundary treatments create confusion and diminish the landscape. Lengths of linear development will be discouraged*

Design and Siting Guidelines

- *A single storey form should be used in areas where this form is prevalent. Houses should be rectangular in plan and simple in form. The house plan should be longer than it is deep to avoid making a squat bulky form in the landscape.*

- *Use external building **materials** prevalent in the area to ensure the development blends with the landscape. Avoid materials which cause the development to be over obtrusive. A suitable brick work finish will be considered.*
- *Consideration will be given to timber dwellings/log cabins in appropriate well screened forestry settings.*
- *Observe and use **colours** prevalent in painted houses in the area; generally white, off-white or light colours will be acceptable.*
- *Avoid over large **windows**; choose smaller windows with a vertical emphasis.*
- *Dark **roofing** materials should be used. While slate is preferable, slate substitute or dark roof tiles will generally be acceptable. Roof pitches should be between 30 – 40 degrees.*
- ***Extensions** should reflect the scale, design and form of the original building.*
- *The front **building line** will be required to take account of the existing and anticipated building lines of adjacent developments. Generally, a front building line with a minimum set back from the new front boundary fence of 9m on county road and 15m on regional roads will be required. Where developments are permitted along national routes a building line suitable for the individual site will be specified in each case, though it will not normally be less than 23m.*
- *Adequate **sightlines** in both directions along the public road at entrances will be required, having due regard to traffic safety and the provisions of section 7.6.17 of this plan.*

The provision of sightlines must take account also of the need to retain traditional roadside boundary ditches and hedgerows. The design and location of new boundaries to meet sightline requirements will be a critical consideration. Sightline requirements will also be considered in the context of the standard and importance of a public road, traffic volumes and speed values.

Water and Wastewater Treatment

- *In general each dwelling should be served by an individual wastewater treatment system or septic tank drainage system and by a piped water supply or a bored well water supply located within the dwelling site. However, the sharing of a treatment plant may be permitted in appropriate circumstances, subject to satisfying all public health issues. In such instances, the parties involved must enter into a legal agreement permitting access, maintenance and improvements to take place.*
- *Septic tank drainage systems and proprietary waste matter treatment systems must comply with all relevant national standards and with the County Council's planning and environmental standards, requirements and criteria. A detailed Site Suitability Report must be submitted with each application. The Report must be prepared by a competent and qualified person holding professional indemnity insurance.*
- *Where the Site Suitability Report indicates test failure, the proposals for sewage treatment and disposal should be modified accordingly and should, where appropriate, include proposals for site improvement.*

Chapter 6

Economic Development

Introduction

- 6.1 A comparative analysis of economic indicators of employment in County Wexford and the rest of the County highlights a number of concerns that require a strategic policy response. In particular there is still a very high dependence on the agriculture sector. The sector has experienced increasingly difficult economic conditions and the likelihood is for significant consolidation and a substantial reduction to take place in the share of employment, which this sector can support in the medium term. Industrial employment is concentrated in traditional sectors, such as metals and engineering, where productivity growth is weak. Foreign direct investment has been comparatively weak and there has been no investment in internationally traded service activities. Tourism is an important sector. While there have been significant developments in this sector in the shape of a three year marketing plan and greater cohesion between industry operators, significant weaknesses remain to be overcome in terms of the tourism product and market focus of the sector.
- 6.2 The County Council has formulated a **Strategy for Economic Development** to tackle these structural problems and to ensure that County Wexford obtains optimum benefit from the investment programme set out in the National Development Plan 2000 – 2006. The Strategy identifies a number of key objectives for the County in promoting economic development including:
- *attracting a larger share of Foreign Direct Investment, especially in Internationally Traded Services*
 - *developing the tourism product*
 - *realising the economic potential of the Rosslare Europort*
 - *securing critical mass in decentralised public services*
- 6.3 The County Council through the County Development Plan and the spatial development strategy can play an important supporting role in the realisation of these objectives and in creating the conditions in which sustainable growth can take place.

6.4 In fostering sustainable economic development, the County Council will:-

- *co-operate with and facilitate a range of agencies including IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland, Wexford Enterprise Board, Wexford Organisation For Rural Development, Area Partnerships, South East Regional Tourism Organisation, FAS and the VEC in their employment, enterprise, social and community development roles.*
- *promote the towns as the main centres for economic, enterprise services and commercial development:*
 - *making optimum use of the development potential created by the availability of infrastructure, future infrastructure investment programmes, the concentration of people and the clustering of services and amenities.*
 - *reducing the need to travel.*
 - *minimising impacts on the natural and built environment.*
 - *maximising the use of derelict and under-utilised land and buildings.*
 - *ensuring balanced development and an equitable distribution of employment.*

Planning's Role in Economic Development

Spatial planning supports economic development by:

- identifying sites and areas offering opportunities for job creation.
- minimising/removing land use and infrastructural constraints to development.
- protecting and enhancing the natural and built environment as important assets for development, e.g., tourism, recreation, education.
- sustainable management of natural resources, e.g. land, water, minerals, the sea and coastal zone which contribute to the provision of jobs
- helping to make towns and villages attractive to inward investment
- facilitating housing development for workers
- dealing efficiently with development proposals through the planning control system.

To implement the policy the County Council will:

- *ensure that sufficient serviced land is available for enterprises and employment and business related development; needs will be assessed and sites/lands identified through the Town and Environs and Village Plan preparation process.*

- *support and assist the provision of local enterprise centres and small workshop cluster facilities.*
 - *assemble suitable serviced sites for workshop clusters.*
 - *encourage mixed use developments to facilitate start up businesses and small enterprises.*
 - *support the development of services, retailing, leisure, entertainment and culture facilities.*
 - *encourage a mixture of public and private uses.*
 - *facilitate and encourage environmental improvements to provide more attractive living and working environments.*
 - *protect townscapes and the historic environment.*
 - *encourage the conversion and re-use of existing buildings to accommodate new innovative enterprises.*
 - *favour development which makes a positive contribution to the environment in terms of clean technology, on-site recycling, waste minimisation and treatment, energy conservation and use of renewable energy sources.*
 - *encourage and facilitate the integration of Urban and Village Renewal Programmes, Town Renewal Schemes, Integrated Town Plans and private commercial redevelopment proposals in support of vibrant commercial environments.*
 - *co-ordinate the provision of necessary infrastructure such as roads, sanitary services, housing, telecommunications, energy and the clearance of derelict land in order to facilitate existing enterprises and to attract further enterprise development.*
- *promote the development of a healthy, sustainable rural economy supporting:*
 - *rural diversification to compensate for reduced employment potential in agriculture.*
 - *community based projects helping to maintain the rural population base.*

To implement this policy, the County Council will:

- *facilitate and encourage the continued sustainable development of a strong core agricultural sector taking advantage of options for farm diversification.*
- *encourage the sensitive utilisation of environmental and cultural assets as a basis for economic development including rural tourism, forestry, organic farming, biomass production, nurseries, agri-business; the re-use of no longer used farm and other rural buildings for this purpose would be particularly acceptable.*

- encourage small enterprises with links to the local community and home based economic activities including teleworking and e-commerce.
- permit industrial development on lands not specifically allocated for industry provided:
 - *the development and associated infrastructure does not cause air or water pollution or otherwise harm the amenities of the area due to noise, dust or fume emissions or traffic generation.*
 - *its times of operation can be controlled.*
 - *its size, scale, layout, design, materials, positioning or appearance does not harm the character of the area.*
 - *it satisfies a local employment need which cannot be met on zoned industrial land.*
 - *it does not conflict with other policy or development objectives particularly the control of development on national roads and the Landscape Protection Strategy.*

- make optimum use of the economic potential provided by County Wexford's strategic location on the national road and TENS network, Rosslare Harbour Europort as a national gateway and the high volume of people and goods moving through the County.

To implement this policy the County Council will:

- *identify a number of strategic sites on the main transport corridors which would attract and cater for foreign direct investment and also meet local need for small enterprise units;*
 - *promote the development of business and office parks catering for high tech enterprise, I.T. and e-commerce.*
 - *promote the location of transport dependent industry and logistics on suitable sites on the main transport corridor, the Rosslare Harbour area being particularly suitable in this regard.*
-
- *pursue and implement a range of objectives in the interests of securing balanced economic growth including:*
 - *promoting the County Council's industrial site at Edermine for enterprise and employment uses primarily and to investigate other potential uses including mixed use.*
 - *encouraging and facilitating the continued decentralisation of Government Departments and Agencies to the County and the decentralisation of Local Government Services to towns within the County.*
 - *preparing an inventory of enterprise and industrial sites and buildings, to identify local need and to address this need in the preparation and review of Town, Environs and Village Plans.*
 - *preparing design guidelines and advice in respect of the development of industrial lands, business and enterprise parks.*
 - *seeking to identify a suitable site/location for an airfield.*

 - *give consideration to permitting the location of small enterprises in residential areas having regard to:*
 - *the scale and nature of the operation.*
 - *the level of activity likely to be generated in terms of public access, traffic movements and deliveries.*
 - *whether a local need is being served.*

- *permission will only be granted where it is clear that residential amenity will not be diminished as a result of the development being carried out.*
- require and expect a high standard of enterprise, employment and industrial development conforming to the guidelines set out below and to other relevant standards and criteria set out in Appendix 2
- *a safe, efficient and attractive road layout and/or site access.*
- *adequate space for parking, turning and loading/unloading of vehicles within the site.*
- *adequate space within the site to meet reasonable extension needs and to accommodate external storage.*
- *buildings should be of a good design and should be sympathetic to the design of buildings in the vicinity.*
- *the site should be designed, planned and landscaped to provide a pleasant working environment, to reduce the visual impact of the development, and to screen and integrate storage and service areas and car parks.*
- *for development in proximity to residential areas or community facilities, it will be necessary to incorporate a planted landscaped buffer zone along the more sensitive boundaries and to make provision for noise pollution control and restrict hours of working.*

6.2 Retailing

6.2.1 The retailing structure of County Wexford is based on the four principal towns as the major shopping areas, with local shopping being provided in the smaller towns and villages. Shopping has the potential to affect the character and environment of the towns and villages and pressure for development outside the core areas is giving rise to environmental and traffic concerns.

6.2.2 The County Council's approach to the future of shopping is focused on five main elements which coincide with national policy:

- *provision of a range and choice of shopping facilities throughout the County accessible to all sections of the community and also to visitors.*
- *the retention of the vitality and viability of town and village centres for shopping and a mix of other activities.*
- *shopping development should be located so as to minimise the length of journeys and in the longer term in locations accessible by public transport.*
- *maximisation of employment opportunities in the retail sector.*
- *ensuring the highest standards of design in new retail developments so as to maintain streetscapes and the architectural integrity of individual buildings which make up a street.*

6.2.3 Changes in retailing patterns and trends are increasingly evident and planning policy must be sufficiently flexible to accommodate these changes. While the County Council accepts the need to attract investment and provide for new retail developments to ensure the continued prosperity of its towns and villages, care must be taken that the long term futures of centre areas as foci for retail activity are maintained. On the other hand, development in town and village centres must not in the process do irreversible damage to their architectural, archaeological and visual integrity.

6.2.4 In seeking to promote and accommodate shopping in the interests of the social and economic well-being and the prosperity of the County, the Council will have regard to the “**Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities**” **Department of the Environment and Local Government, December, 2000** and will implement the following policies:

- **Town and Village Centres:**

Development which favours the clustering of retailing will generally be welcomed in these areas. Infill development and the refurbishment of existing premises for retail purposes will be encouraged, where it is considered sympathetic to existing developments and the streetscape in

general. Where modern designs are permitted, it is essential that they do not detract from the traditional character of town or village centres. In the interests of reducing on-street congestion and pedestrian conflict, retail developments with access to rear servicing areas will be particularly favoured. In addition to retailing, a mix of commercial activity will be encouraged as a means of regenerating core areas, thereby encouraging further investment.

- **Out-of-Town Shopping Centres**

Out-of-town shopping centres encourage car-borne shopping, increase journey length and threaten the vitality of existing town centres and village shops. Where a significant increase in need in shopping floor space has been proven, such space should be provided within the designated development areas of the larger towns, where zoned and serviced lands are available.

- **Retail Warehousing**

These large single level retail stores provide a range of goods including DIY, building materials, furniture, carpets, electrical goods, garden and housing products. They are normally not suited to town centre locations and tend to locate instead in other commercial or industrial areas.

Applications for retail warehouses will only be considered where there is a proven need for such a facility and no other more appropriate site is available in the town or vicinity. If it is intended to locate in an industrial area, the retailing function must be secondary to the main use of the area for industrial purposes. In assessing applications for such development the County Council will have regard, inter alia, to the following:

- *size and scale of the development*
- *types of goods sold*

- *design and landscaping proposals*
- *road infrastructure in the vicinity and access*
- *accessibility by public transport*
- *adequacy of car parking and other servicing proposals*
- *impacts on retailing structure in the area and on residential amenity*

- **Shops in Rural Areas**

These facilities play a vital role in the social and economic development of rural areas, particularly if located in conjunction with other services such as post offices, and small filling stations. The County Council will encourage the retention and improvement of these facilities and the provision of new facilities on a scale appropriate to the needs of the local community in existing settlements or clusters of development in support of its policy on promoting sustainable rural development.

The random development of new retail facilities away from existing clusters or settlements will be discouraged. All development will be required to comply with normal planning standards and requirements.

- **Convenience Shops**

Small local shops in and adjoining housing areas located at an inconvenient distance from town and village centres play an important social and service role for local communities. The County Council, while not encouraging a proliferation of these facilities, will consider permitting the improvement and provision of such development having regard to local need, parking provision and other planning standards and requirements.

6.2.5 All applications for retail development will be assessed and evaluated in the context of “**Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities**” **Department of the Environment and Local Government**, December 2000.

- 6.2.6 The Council will prepare, in conjunction with Waterford County Council, Waterford Corporation and Kilkenny County Council, a comprehensive retail strategy in accordance with the requirements set out in the “**Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities**” Department of the Environment and Local Government, December 2000.

Shop Front Design

- 6.2.7 Shop front design has the potential to contribute significantly to the environmental quality of retail development in urban and rural areas. In general, the design of the shopfronts should relate to the architectural character of the area or of the building of which it forms part. Developers and designers are advised to consult the design guide ‘**Shopfronts and Streetscapes in County Wexford**’ (Wexford Local Authorities, 1991) prior to preparing plans. The following principles apply to shop-front design:

- *the design, materials, colour and detailing of the entire building should be reflected in the shopfront, where possible, elements of the original shopfront should also be retained*
- *new shopfront design in existing shopping streets should respect the scale and proportions of the streetscape*
- *corporate images and use of standardised shopfronts will not necessarily be permitted; any images used must be compatible with the individual building and the general streetscape*
- *the use of harsh, shiny, plastic surfaces, chrome, reflective glass or garish colours should be avoided as they generally clash with a traditional townscape*
- *the appropriate use of colour can give life to a streetscape, with contrasting colours assisting in highlighting building and shopfront details*
- *advertising signs associated with the premises should not dominate the building façade or interfere with building details*

- *the use of traditional details such as fascias, pilasters and stall risers is encouraged*

6.2.8 Roller shutters on or in front of the building line require planning permission. In general no part of the shutter or its casing should extend beyond the face of the building. Shutter colours should blend with the overall colour scheme.

Take Away Restaurants/Fast Food Outlets

6.2.9 Proposals for the development of these facilities will generally only be acceptable in areas of mixed use activity such as town or village centres. Only in exceptional circumstances will such development be considered in residential areas, having regard to the negative impacts including noise, litter, opening hours and general disturbance, to which it can give rise. Stringent controls will be applied with regard to litter collection and façade design. The latter may necessitate the alteration of corporate images in order to assimilate into the character of the area.

6.3 Tourism

6.3.1 The County Council supports the development of sustainable tourism as an essential element in the economic development of County Wexford. The basis of tourism is the rich and mainly unspoilt character of Wexford's coast, countryside, natural and built environment. This character must be maintained and enhanced as the fundamental resource of the tourism sector.

6.3.2 The National Development Plan 2000 – 2006 recognises that the future development of tourism is critically dependent on managing growth on an environmentally sustainable basis. The emphasis on investment allocated under the National Development Plan will be on developing in rural and less developed areas as part of an integrated strategy for rural development. The County Council supports this emphasis and will seek to achieve a wider distribution of the benefits of tourism while counteracting its seasonal nature and over concentration in certain areas. The upgrading and improvement of the range and quality of tourism accommodation will be a major policy objective.

Sustainable Tourism

Strategies for tourism cannot be developed in isolation from an overall framework for management of the environment. Unmanaged tourism has the potential to become the greatest threat to the character of the landscape and local environment. Sustainable tourism depends upon:

- *ensuring the economic stability of host communities*
 - *preventing tourism from excluding other forms of economic development,*
- and is defined as:
- *socially and environmentally considerate*
 - *drawing on the natural beauty and character of the area*
 - *small in scale and developing slowly*
 - *supporting the local economy and employing local people*
 - *caring about quality*
 - *bringing conservation and recreation benefits*
 - *and, importantly, developing at a pace and scale which ensure that the assets of the area (both natural and cultural) are not diminished in the long term.*

6.3.3 The County Council will also facilitate tourism development in towns and villages which also benefits rural development through:

- *creation of value added enterprises and sustainable employment*
- *attraction and direction of tourists to surrounding rural areas*

6.3.4 While seeking to ensure that most tourism development locates in or close to towns and villages, the County Council recognises, that by its nature, some tourism development may require other locations. Such development may be acceptable if it accords with Coastal Development and Landscape Protection Policies and provides a range of facilities which would also be available to the local community.

6.3.5 In support of the development of sustainable tourism, the County Council will:

- *assist in the achievement of the aims and objectives of the ‘**Tourism Development Strategy for County Wexford**’ and co-operate with national and regional agencies, local communities and the commercial sector in this regard*
- *seek to provide the necessary physical infrastructure to support the development of tourism in accordance with the overall spatial development and investment strategy*
- *foster and enhance the distinctiveness of County Wexford as a key component of the tourism product:*
 - *protecting the environment, its distinctive countryside, coastline and beaches including regaining and maintaining the Blue Flag status of the beaches at Courtown, Curracloe, Duncannon and Rosslare.*
 - *protecting the County’s built heritage and historic environment.*
 - *capitalising on the rural tourism base and assets, including villages and settlements.*
 - *managing change so that it is sensitive to the quality of the environment and local identity.*
- *protect the quality of natural and built heritage resources as the basis for attracting tourists and for the enjoyment and benefit of the local community:*
 - *facilitating the strengthening and diversification of the tourism roles of the traditional seaside resorts, Ballymoney, Courtown, Kilmuckridge/Morriscastle, Blackwater, Curracloe, Rosslare, Cullenstown, Fethard and Duncannon, including promotion of linkages to their rural hinterlands and the provision of a range of outdoor and wet weather facilities;*
 - *promoting and protecting the main towns as areas of cultural and heritage tourism, and strengthening their role as alternative places to visit;*
 - *protecting and facilitating the sensitive revitalisation of the small towns, villages and settlements and the countryside as a focus for rural tourism;*
 - *protecting inland waterways as resources for water based activities including angling and cruising;*

- *protecting the character and biodiversity of the countryside and coastline as locations for the development of activity based holidays including walking, cycling, birdwatching and to co-operate with national agencies in developing these facilities; the continued development of the Coastal Path with linkages to other national and regional long distance walking routes will be a priority in this regard;*
 - *designating and promoting distinctive tourism areas within the County based on their distinctive landscapes, nature conservation importance or the quality of their townscapes and architectural character, e.g., the Blackstairs Mountains, the Slaney Valley, the South Coast, the River Barrow; the County Council intends to prepare strategic management plans for these areas which will include examination of the possibility of making Special Amenity Area Orders for Lady's Island Lake, Tacumshin Lake and Bannow Bay.*
-
- *identify opportunities for developing and extending the availability of outdoor pursuits including the development of golfing facilities in an environmentally sensitive manner*
 - *encourage the development of rural tourism and rural diversification associated with rural crafts, rural museums, organic farming and the provision of on-farm tourism accommodation*
 - *encourage the development of green tourism based on the sensitive use of resources in association where possible with national and local agencies and organisations*
 - *encourage the re-use and refurbishment of underused and/or derelict buildings as tourism accommodation and give favourable consideration to the appropriate restoration and conversion of these buildings*
 - *encourage the incorporation in new developments in towns and villages of facilities and services to cater for passing tourists, e.g., cafes, shops, filling stations*
 - *strengthen and develop countywide touring opportunities through the provision of support infrastructure for the benefit of coach parties,*

motorists, cyclists including information/sanitary facilities, sites for touring caravans/motorhomes

- *upgrade the range and quality of hotel accommodation and facilities through the implementation of the **Hotel Development Strategy** set out in the 'Study of the Hotel Industry in County Wexford' 1999, including:*
 - *encouraging the extension and upgrading of existing hotels*
 - *favouring higher grade, larger scale developments and developments offering a wide range of facilities*
 - *encouraging different types of developments in different parts of the County*
- *seek the development of mixed unit sizes in holiday home developments*
- *control large holiday home developments in small towns and villages having regard to the need to ensure a balanced year round population and the capacity of existing infrastructure and to ensure that these developments do not over dominate their host settlements to the detriment of residential and other amenities, and that they relate sympathetically to the scale and character of these areas;*
- *to limit tourism development, outside existing settlements, to proposals suitable in scale and character to the locality, which do not have significant adverse impacts on the landscape, amenity, nature conservation, or the conservation of the historic environment and where a substantiated need has been identified;*
- *control the unplanned, sporadic development of rural housing, not related to local need, which detracts from the tourism and amenity value of rural areas;*

Holiday Villages

6.3.6 The County Council recognises the growing demand for and attraction of tourism based on large holiday village developments, and the need for flexibility in accommodating such development which may add to the overall quality of the tourism product and benefit the wider community. Consideration will be given to permitting a limited number of such

developments provided they do not conflict with other strategic objectives and meet the following minimum requirements:

- *they consist of well researched, justified and imaginative integrated projects which include a realistic combination of the following:*
 - *hotel facilities including conference and leisure facilities*
 - *indoor and outdoor recreation facilities including golf, swimming, equestrian*
 - *entertainment facilities*
 - *tourist related leisure facilities including walking and cycling*
- *they do not contravene the Landscape Protection and Coastal Development Policies*
- *they relate sympathetically to the scale and level of activity in the locality*
- *they will not adversely affect the character or appearance of the countryside*
- *they will not result in detrimental impact on road safety or the free flow of traffic and do not require improvements which would detract from the character of rural roads*
- *they will not have an adverse impact on the character or siting of settlements or the amenity of existing residents*
- *they will not have adverse impact on sites of nature conservation value or archaeological importance or structures of architectural or historic interest*
- *any new dwellings are of a good standard of design and are sympathetic to the landscape in terms of their siting and materials*

6.3.7 Development proposals will receive full environmental evaluation in the context of these requirements. Planning applications should include full and detailed information to facilitate this evaluation. Details of servicing, phasing and long term management of the project must be submitted.

Caravan and Camping Developments

- 6.3.8 County Wexford has traditionally been the location for tourism based in mobile home parks and caravan sites. Many of these parks and sites are maintained to very high standards and contribute significantly to the economy of the County. Depending of location however, such developments can be highly intrusive. Accordingly, the development of new facilities will be resisted, especially along the open, undeveloped coastline, in vulnerable and sensitive landscape areas and within the settings of buildings of historic importance. Emphasis will be placed instead on improving the visual and environmental acceptability of existing sites and on upgrading their infrastructure and facilities. Modest additions to or infilling on existing parks or sites will be considered in conjunction with such facility, environmental and infrastructural improvements.
- 6.3.9 While touring caravan sites tend to be less obtrusive than static sites, the provision of new facilities will be assessed against strict planning, design and environmental criteria: development will be resisted in areas already well provided for and in areas of landscape vulnerability and sensitivity.
- 6.3.10 In evaluating development proposals the County Council will apply the following minimum standards, criteria and guidelines:
- *design and layout must be of a high standard with an emphasis on innovation to provide an integrated design concept linking residential units to well located communal areas, on-site facilities and amenities. Reference should be made to Bord Failte's 'Guidelines for Development of Caravan and Camping Sites' (1982) in this regard;*
 - *a comprehensive landscaping scheme must form an integral part of site development. Sites should be located to take advantage of existing natural screening. New planting should be designed to reinforce existing landscape features including hedgerows, woodlands, trees and shrubs.*

Landscaping proposals should provide for generous planting in groups and zones using indigenous species. The scheme should be prepared by a qualified and competent person;

- *parks and sites must connect to existing water and wastewater treatment infrastructure where this is available without placing unsustainable demands on these services;*
- *private wastewater treatment infrastructure must meet the County Council's planning and environmental protection standards and criteria. An adequate daily supply of potable water and water storage must be provided to service each unit. Sanitary facilities and/or permanent dwellings should not be located within 9 metres of any pitch. Sites should be accessible to local utilities and have adequate on site scavenging services;*
- *parks and sites should be provided with adequate roads and parking areas with at least one parking space per pitch and an appropriate number of additional spaces for visitors. Clear spacing in all directions must be provided around each pitch. Entrance/reception areas should be provided with adequate parking and turning facilities. Public lighting should be provided at low level and intensity;*
- *developments should not detract from the privacy and amenity enjoyed by local residents. Sites should be designed and laid out so that residential property is not overlooked.*

6.3.11 In addition to the necessity to obtain planning permission, developers are required to obtain a license to operate parks and sites under Section 34 of the Local Government (Sanitary Services) Act, 1948 and to comply with the conditions attached to the licence. Existing sites which do not reach the specified standards will be encouraged to do so, and where action is not taken to improve standards the Council will consider using its statutory powers to regulate such sites.

Holiday Homes

6.3.12 Second home and holiday home type development can raise concerns regarding long-term sustainability, effects on the affordability of housing in rural areas for permanent rural dwellers and the incremental effect on the character of some smaller towns and villages where large scale holiday home type development has taken place.

Individual holiday homes or cluster of holiday homes will not be permitted in the open countryside unless they are attached to rural leisure resource based at that location. Individual units should be designed and sited so as not to have an adverse impact on the character or setting of settlements or the amenity of existing residents. Overall there should be an emphasis on innovation in design and layout providing for an integrated development linking units to open space and facilities. Suburban style housing estate layouts will not be acceptable. Existing site features including trees and hedgerows should be retained to form part of a comprehensive landscaping scheme; applications for holiday home developments should be accompanied by details of an agreement to the effect that the overall development will be retained in single company ownership, or as a time share or similar arrangement; a management company should be established to manage the overall development and the repair and maintenance of any private wastewater treatment system.’

6.4 Extractive Industry

6.4.1 The County Council recognises that the aggregate and concrete products industry contributes to the development of the national and local economies by the proper use and management of natural resources for the benefit of the community and the creation of employment opportunities. These products are required as essential building materials in the social and economic development process including the provision of housing and infrastructure. The County Council will seek to safeguard these valuable resources for future extraction.

6.4.2 The County Council also recognises that this industry has the potential for significant adverse impacts on the environment and local communities. It can create conflicts with other land uses and cause damage to public roads infrastructure. The County Council will ensure that development for aggregate extraction, processing, delivery and concrete production is carried out in a manner which minimises these adverse impacts. Developers must ensure that the terms of planning permissions are strictly adhered to and that on completion of operations the site is left in a satisfactory state and be of beneficial after use.

6.4.3 In facilitating the sustainable development of the extractive industry, the County Council will:

- *ensure as a priority the protection of the environment, the landscape, residential and tourist amenity*
- *ensure, where extractive development is proposed in vulnerable and sensitive landscape areas, that protection of landscape character will be the main priority, with the onus being placed on the developer to prove that the proposed development can be accommodated in the landscape without detracting from it's character*
- *ensure, where extractive development is proposed in areas or near sites of nature conservation value, archaeological or historic importance, that protection of these environmental assets and resources take precedence over the need to develop the mineral resource*
- *ensure that satisfactory provision is made for the acceptable and beneficial after use of extraction sites and that the landscaping and restoration of sites is carried out in a phased progressive manner to the highest standards in accordance with a scheme approved under the terms of the planning permission*
- *require the lodgement of security for the satisfactory restoration and after care of sites and for the maintenance, upgrading, strengthening and repair of an affected road network*

- *ensure that the full costs of remedial works and road improvements are borne by the developer*
- *ensure that development sites have safe and efficient access to the public road network*
- *exercise a general presumption against developments where associated traffic volumes are considered prejudicial to the safety and convenience of road users or the amenity of persons living on roads close to the site of the proposed operations*
- *ensure the protection of all watercourses from pollutants associated with developments sites*
- *control and minimise the cumulative impact of development caused by the merging of contiguous development sites*
- *require the submission, in conjunction with the planning application, of full details in respect of:*
 - *the exact boundaries of the proposed site and the scale and nature of extraction methods and activities.*
 - *contours, depths of excavations.*
 - *directions and phasing of workings.*
 - *watercourses and water table depth.*
 - *locations of stockpiles.*
 - *restoration , landscaping, proposed after use care and details of phasing of these works.*
 - *blasting.*
 - *fixed and movable plant.*
 - *access and public road network which it is proposed to use.*
 - *dwellinghouses in the vicinity of the site and approach roads.*
- *facilitate applicants/developers in scoping Environmental Impact Statements.*

6.5 Filling Stations

6.5.1 The traditional role of filling stations is expanding to include the provision of general convenience retail provision serving local communities in suburban,

town, village and rural locations. While acknowledging the function that these facilities fulfil in meeting retail needs, the County Council will require that they remain ancillary and secondary to the main filling station function in order to maintain the County's retail structure and in the interests of traffic safety and amenity.

6.5.2 In considering development proposals, the County Council will have regard to:

- *the need for a filling station at the proposed location;*
- *access arrangements, provision for parking and turning and the character of the public road network, traffic volumes and speeds.*
- *adequacy and suitability of proposals for site layout, design and landscaping.*
- *impact on residential amenities.*
- *proposed use of the site including proportion of natural space in context of overall site.*

6.5.3 In general filling stations, where a need has been established, should be located within the 30 mph or 40 mph speed limits and/or within the development area boundaries of towns and villages on lands zoned for town centre, village expansion or general commercial or industrial uses. Residential areas should be avoided. Development of filling stations in rural areas will generally not be acceptable unless there is a clear case of hardship for a particular isolated community. Developments on national road networks will be strictly controlled. A proliferation or an over-concentration of filling stations along a particular road or within a town or village, will not be acceptable because of the cumulative environmental impact on visual or residential amenity and the creation of a traffic hazard. Small servicing work shops may be acceptable depending on location and proximity to residential property.

Petrol Filling Stations											
Design Standards and Guidelines											
<u>Overall Design</u>	High standard of design and comprehensive landscaping, providing for an integrated site development concept covering buildings, structures, canopies, advertising, lighting; taking into account also the design and character of the built environment in the vicinity.										
<u>Access</u>	The width of the accesses shall be not less than 6m and not more than 9m The radii of the kerbs at the entrance and exits shall be not less than 10m The minimum distance from the entrance (access way) to the nearest road junction or traffic lights shall be as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major roads 50m Minor roads 25m 										
<u>Frontage</u>	Towns and Villages: Minimum 31m Rural: 45m The site shall be clearly demarcated from the public road with a low wall not exceeding 0.5m in height constructed along all of the front boundary line. A footpath shall also be provided outside the boundary wall.										
<u>Location of Structures</u>	The centre island containing the pumps shall in no case be nearer than 7m. to the edge of the road curtilage. No obstruction other than the pump island shall be located within 15m. of the road boundary. No structures whether permanent or temporary shall interfere with the sight lines of drivers or obstruct pedestrians.										
<u>Visibility</u>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: center;"><u>Speed Value of Road</u></th> <th style="text-align: center;"><u>Minimum Visibility Distances Required – Single Carriageway</u></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>40 kph.</td> <td>170 m.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>60 kph.</td> <td>170 m.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>80 kph.</td> <td>230 m.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>100 kph.</td> <td>280 m.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<u>Speed Value of Road</u>	<u>Minimum Visibility Distances Required – Single Carriageway</u>	40 kph.	170 m.	60 kph.	170 m.	80 kph.	230 m.	100 kph.	280 m.
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40 kph.	170 m.										
60 kph.	170 m.										
80 kph.	230 m.										
100 kph.	280 m.										
<u>Parking</u>	Parking bays/aisles must be so located as to minimise pedestrian/vehicular conflict. Adequate parking, screened from general view, to cater for vehicles being serviced. Adequate parking for disabled persons shall be provided.										
<u>Lighting</u>	Lights, signs and other appurtenance shall not be located where they cause glare hazard or confusion to public road users. All illumination on outdoor areas shall be shielded so as not to shine upon any property used for residential purposes.										
<u>Advertising/Canopies</u>	Minimal and necessary advertising only. Main sign/logo shall not exceed 4.5m. in height. Advertising shall not interfere with visibility lines. Forecourt and footpath shall not be used for the location of advertising. Advertising which is visually intrusive or interrupts the continuity of streetscapes will not be permitted. Design and scale of canopies to have regard to site location, siting and local architectural character.										
<u>Drainage/General Facilities</u>	The surface of the forecourt shall be graded, surfaced with bitumen macadam or other suitable material and drained to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority and maintained in that condition. A petrol/oil interceptor trap shall be fitted to the surface water drainage system. Provision shall be made for the storage and removal of refuse and waste material. Depending on location/size of the development, it may be necessary to provide sanitary accommodation for public use.										
<u>Retail Uses</u>	Size of convenience retail component/range of goods for sale may be limited having regard to location, retail facilities available in vicinity, adequacy of parking, traffic safety.										

6.6 Advertising

6.6.1 The County Council recognises the role which advertising plays in the commercial life of the County. It is also recognised that the haphazard proliferation of hoardings, signs and finger post signs in rural areas has the potential to detract from visual and scenic amenities and through confusion give rise to traffic hazard. In towns and villages, uncontrolled advertising detracts from the character and identity of settlements and if located at junctions or in competition with traffic signs, can give rise to traffic hazard.

6.6.2 It will be the policy of the County Council to control and limit advertising throughout the County to that which is absolutely necessary. In rural areas advertising will be discouraged particularly if it would impact adversely on protected structures, or on views and prospects along scenic routes. In towns and villages the erection of advertising hoardings and structures will be discouraged particularly in residential areas or in proximity to protected structures.

6.6.3 In exceptional circumstances, consideration will be given to permitting hoardings in the commercial/industrial areas of towns on a temporary basis where they help to screen a building or derelict sites and where they form an integral part of the boundary treatment of a site. The size and placement should be such that they can be integrated into the streetscape. Where advertising hoardings are acceptable on the sides or gable ends of buildings, they will not normally be permitted to exceed 25% of the surface area to which they are attached. Where consideration is given to the location of advertising on building facades, or elsewhere in towns and villages, the following guidelines and requirements will apply:

Planning Permission and Advertising Structures

Planning permission is required for the erection of signs located on private property, save those exempted under Schedule 2, Part 2 of the Local Government (Planning & Development) Regulations 1994. The erection of advertising signs on, over or along the public road are licensable under Section 89 of the 1963 Planning Act. Such licences are granted on a temporary basis, normally annually.

- *the number and positions of signs should not unduly clutter the building façade or streetscape*

- *it should be sympathetic in design and colouring, both to the building on which it will be displayed and its surroundings*
- *it should not obscure architectural features or details*
- *the construction of nameplate fascias linking two or more buildings of different architectural designs and character will not be acceptable*
- *high level advertising will not be permitted; signs should be positioned at or below ground floor fascia level; signs will not be permitted above eaves or parapet levels*
- *it shall not exceed 10% of the surface area of the building*
- *the size, scale, number, materials, lighting, logos and design of signs, flagpoles and other features will be strictly controlled*
- *traditional painted sign writing or solid block individual lettering will be encouraged as will traditional timber or wrought iron hanging signs; projecting signs will be limited to one per building*
- *the use of neon, plastic, PVC, perspex flashing, reflectorised or glitter type signs on the exterior of buildings or where they are located internally but visible from the outside will be prohibited*
- *internally illuminated box fascia signs and projecting signs will be prohibited*
- *the use of corporate or brand advertising where it is not appropriate to the external appearance of a building will be discouraged; where corporate advertising is acceptable, it must be integrated into and be sympathetic to the streetscape*
- *signs must not compete with road signs or otherwise endanger traffic safety*
- *sandwich boards and free standing signs will be discouraged in order to protect pedestrians and in particular people with disabilities*

6.6.4 The use of plastic canopies over windows will be discouraged. Where shading of a window display is required the traditional retractable awning is considered suitable.

6.6.5 The use of metal security grills or shutters will be discouraged. Where it is suggested as essential to use such shutters, these should be open grilled, and

should be affixed to the inside of the window, or preferably behind the display area. The use of the public footpath for security stanchions or roller shutter fixings is not acceptable.

Roadside Advertising Structures (Section 89 Licensing)

6.6.6 The County Council will give consideration to permitting the erection of finger post signs to service local premises away from main traffic routes in rural areas provided:

- *they do not give rise to confusion or traffic hazard*
- *the sign relates to premises located in a rural area within 1 km of the advertisement*
- *the need for the sign is clearly established*
- *they contain only directional information*
- *it does not exceed 1.4 sq. m.*
- *an existing post is used where possible*

6.6.7 Licence applications for advance advertising structures on the approaches to towns and villages and along national roads will generally be refused. Exceptions would be major tourism attractions of national or regional importance.

6.6.8 The County Council will only consider the licencing of fingerpost signs for general commercial activities in isolated urban and rural areas. Compliance with the criteria set out above will be required. If more than one industry is located in the same area, a general sign may be provided. Directional information only should be included on the sign.

6.6.9 The County Council will encourage the location of tourism signage that will facilitate the identification of attractions of national and regional importance but does not distract from visual amenity or create traffic hazard. Signage for tourism attractions and accommodation facilities is generally expected to

comply with the standards outlined in *Criteria for the Provision of Tourist Attraction and Accommodation Signs* issued by the Department of the Environment.

Chapter 7

Infrastructure

Introduction

7.1 The provision and improvement of infrastructure is essential to the achievement of the Council's social, economic and environmental objectives. The development of new and improved roads and other transportation modes and investment in environmental services, energy and telecommunications will play a major role in:

- *securing a more balanced spread of development across the County*
- *supporting social, economic and tourism development*
- *protecting environmental assets and resources*
- *ensuring compliance with National and European Union legislation*

The following sections of the Plan provide a land use framework to guide and manage the investment programme in the provision of infrastructure in line with the policies, objectives and proposals set out in the National Development Plan 2000 – 2006.

7.2 Water Supply

7.2.1 Water is a vital resource accommodating all development needs. The quality of this resource is critical for the public health, environmental and economic success of the County. The major challenges for the future in terms of water supply are:

- *ensuring a steady supply so that everyone has access to potable water at affordable costs*
- *conserving and protecting sources of supply through the application of the principles of sustainability in their development, and controlling development in their vicinity which would give rise to adverse impacts*
- *implementing a planned programme in support of the town, village and rural development strategies*

7.2.2 The County Council is committed to a major programme of investment in the provision of water supplies, based on a regional framework. This programme

gives priority to meeting the needs of the major urban areas where most new development will be concentrated, and to the needs of the towns and villages, particularly in coastal areas, which are under most development pressure and are currently experiencing supply deficiencies. The Rural Water Programme which facilitates group schemes and individual consumers, will provide the necessary funding to improve the quantity, quality and conservation of supplies serving rural areas.

7.2.3 In implementing this programme, the County Council will comply with European Union Directives and national legislation. Water conservation will be an important element of the programme. Progress is already being made in this area through the County Wexford Water Conservation Scheme.

7.2.4 In support of it's water supply objectives the County Council will:

- *maintain, improve and augment water supplies in accordance with the priorities identified in the Assessment of Needs List to facilitate the implementation of the development strategy*
- *ensure the provision of adequate supplies of good quality water to rural areas through the Rural Water Programme*
- *implement, co-ordinate and manage the Water Development Programme so as to avoid ad hoc investment to meet the needs of unplanned, random development*
- *encourage and facilitate development in towns, villages and settlements to make optimum use of existing and planned investment in water infrastructure*
- *implement the following Capital Investment Programme:*

<u>Major Water Supply Schemes</u>	<u>Small Water Supply Schemes</u>
<u>Scheme</u>	<u>Scheme</u>
Fardystown Regional Water	Adamstown
Gorey Region	Bunclody
Gorey Region/Courtown	Clonroche
East Central Region	Coolgreany
South West Region	Enniscorthy/Clonhasten
Kilmore	Kilmuckridge
Rosslare	Taghmon
Taghmon	
County Wexford Water Conservation	
Gorey Regional Water (Conservation)	
Wexford Town Water (Conservation)	

- *promote the efficient and economic use of water including the elimination of leakages;*
- *facilitate group scheme and other water consumers in meeting their needs in terms of water quantity and quality and in complying with European Union Directives and National legislation;*
- *bring the quality of all public and group water supplies up to the **Drinking Water Directive Standards (98/83/EC)**;*
- *facilitate interim and temporary solutions and public – private partnerships for the provision of water supplies;*
- *facilitate and promote the Serviced Land Initiative in accommodating development;*
- *prepare a Strategic Rural Water Plan.*

7.3 Protecting Water Resources

7.3.1 Wexford is a coastal County dependent to a considerable extent on ground water as a source of supply. The protection and maintenance of the quality and health of coastal, estuarine, ground and surface water resources is critical

to the health of the community and economic development. The adequacy of water resources and possible risks to water quality, fisheries, amenity and conservation will assume a high priority in considering development proposals. The County Council is fully committed to protecting these resources and to controlling development which would threaten their integrity.

7.3.2 In support of this commitment the County Council will:

- *ensure compliance with the **Protection of Groundwater Regulations 1999***
- *continue to implement, monitor and refine the Aquifer Protection Policy and prohibit development which would contravene that policy. See Table 1 – Aquifer Protection Zones and Map No.2*
- *prepare and implement a comprehensive Groundwater Protection Scheme with the overall aim of preserving the quality of groundwater particularly for abstraction purposes*
- *improve the quality of discharges to meet appropriate water quality targets including the requirements of European Union Directives*
- *review and update the Slaney and Barrow Water Quality Management Plans and prepare Catchment Management and Nutrient Management Plans*
- *maintain the quality of coastal waters through the continued improvement of sewerage infrastructure and effluent treatment systems serving coastal settlements*
- *protect bathing waters so that they meet the standards set down by European Union Directives*
- *ensure that arrangements for the treatment and disposal of effluent from all new developments meet required environmental standards*
- *have regard to the Precautionary and Polluter Pays Principles*
- *protect the Coolree Reservoir and environs from pollution*

TABLE 1

AQUIFER PROTECTION ZONES	
ZONE 1 – SOURCE PROTECTION ZONE	
SUB ZONE 1A	
EXTENT	10m from public ground water abstractions.
STATUS	Fixed.
PROHIBIT	All activities with any degree of pollution risk.
SUB ZONE 1B	
EXTENT	100 m from public ground water abstractions.
STATUS	Variable with geological conditions.
PROHIBIT	Septic tanks. Soakaways of any type. Spreading of sewage sludge. Burial grounds. Waste disposal sites. Storage of industrial chemicals. Storage or disposal of farm chemicals. Foul sewers or house drains.
CONTROL	Application of fertilisers. Spreading of manure or slurry.
SUB ZONE 1C	
EXTENT	250m from public ground water abstractions.
STATUS	Fixed.
PROHIBIT	Waste disposal sites. Storage of industrial chemicals. Intensive agricultural developments. Construction of waste liquid ponds.
CONTROL	Construction of soak pits. Use of farm chemicals.
SUB ZONE 1D	
EXTENT	100m from surface water courses and areas vulnerable to ground water pollution.
STATUS	Fixed.
PROHIBIT	As in sub zone 1B
CONTROL	As in sub zone 1C
ZONE 2 – MAJOR AQUIFER PROTECTION ZONE	
EXTENT	Area underlain by major aquifer.
CONTROL	Waste disposal sites. Storage of industrial and farm chemicals. Construction of waste liquid ponds. Intensive agricultural developments. Construction of septic tanks; one acre sites. Use of farm chemicals. 1 acre sites for conventional sites only.

7.4 Wastewater Treatment

7.4.1 The provision of wastewater treatment infrastructure is essential to accommodate the economic, social, public and environmental health needs of the County and in facilitating the implementation of the town and village development strategy. In addition the continued improvement and provision of this infrastructure is necessary to meet the requirements of the European Union Wastewater Treatment Directive. While much progress has been made in improving the level and quality of wastewater treatment, a planned focused investment programme is needed not only to accommodate existing deficiencies but also to cater for growing housing, commercial and tourism needs. The programme set out in this plan is designed to service the present and future needs of the towns and villages where growth will be concentrated over the plan period and beyond. Facilitating the planned, phased expansion of towns and villages dispersed throughout the County is in accordance with the strategic objective of achieving balanced equitable development. The approach has the added advantage of pre-empting demands for inappropriate ad hoc investment while ensuring value for the community in making optimum use of past and current investment.

7.4.2 In addition to its own investment programme, the County Council will consider interim solutions for the provision of wastewater infrastructure to service development in towns and villages which accords with the Council's strategic objectives and town and village development plans. This would include installation of treatment plants by developers and/or public/private partnership arrangements.

7.4.3 In support of its Wastewater Strategy, the County Council will:

- *implement a capital investment programme for the provision of wastewater treatment and disposal in accordance with the overall spatial development strategy and the land use zoning objectives of town and village plans; details of the programme are set out hereunder;*

Urban Sewerage Schemes	Small Sewerage Schemes
Gorey	Adamstown
Enniscorthy	Ballaghkeen
New Ross	Ballygarrett
Wexford	Ballyhack
County Wexford Sludge Disposal Plan	Bree
Village Sewerage Schemes	Bridgetown
Arthurstown	Campile
Ballycanew	Castledockrell
Blackwater	Clongeen
Bunclody	Clonroche
Camolin	Duncannon
Carrick – on – Bannow	Ferns
Castlebridge	Kilmyshall
Clonroche	Kiltealy
Coolgreany	Lady's Island
Courtown	Marshalstown
Curracloe	Murntown
Fethard	Rathnure
Kilmore Quay	
Kilmuckridge	
Oilgate	
Rosslare	
Rosslare Harbour	
Taghmon	

- *accommodate the provision of wastewater treatment and disposal infrastructure in towns and villages where public facilities are proposed but not yet available through the installation of communal treatment plants subject to satisfactory planning and environmental assessment,*

and the conclusion of construction and management agreements and the subsequent taking in charge of facilities

- *accommodate the provision of private treatment and disposal facilities to service large strategic integrated commercial, tourism or leisure developments in unserviced areas subject to satisfactory planning and environmental assessment, and the conclusion of construction and management agreements, provided the development does not conflict with other social, economic and environmental objectives*
- *enter into public/private partnerships for the provision of wastewater infrastructure*
- *ensure that single houses only are serviced by individual septic tank drainage systems subject to environmental assessment and evaluation*
- *require the installation of proprietary wastewater treatment systems for otherwise acceptable development on lands not suitable for simple septic tank drainage systems subject to environmental assessment and evaluation and the conclusion of manufacturers maintenance contracts*
- *prohibit the random in-depth development of unserviced land in the vicinity of towns and villages where there is a reasonable supply of serviced land, including brownfield sites, within the relevant town and village development area boundary*
- *meet in full the requirements of the European Union Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive*
- *ensure that arrangements for the treatment and disposal of effluent from all forms of development meet environmentally acceptable standards*

Wastewater Treatment Plants and Residential Development

7.4.4 A buffer zone will be required around wastewater treatment systems. Table 2 below sets out recommended minimum distances which should be used as a guide to avoiding odour and noise nuisance from a treatment system. In addition, for a system size > 81 p.e., at least 30 metres of the distance specified in Table 2 should be in the possession of the operator of the treatment system. In no case will residential development be permitted

within the distance specified in Table 2. In very exceptional circumstances, consideration will be given to development which includes the improvement and/or upgrading of an existing substandard or malfunctioning treatment system.

The minimum distances in Table 2 below may need to be increased where the treatment system is particularly noisy and/or prone to odours. For security reasons a good quality fence should be erected to prevent unwanted access.

TABLE 2

**Wastewater Treatment Systems and Residential Development –
Recommended Minimum Distances:**

<u>System Size p.e.</u>	<u>Approx. Number of Houses Served</u>	<u>Distance from existing and proposed residential development (m)</u>
10 – 40	2 – 10	28
41 – 60	11 - 15	31
61 – 80	16 – 20	34
81 – 100	21 – 25	37
101 – 120	26 – 30	40
121 – 140	31 – 35	43
141 – 160	36 – 40	46
161 – 500	41 – 125	50
500 - 5000	>125	100
>5000	N/A	150

7.5 Waste Management

7.5.1 Efficient waste management infrastructure is vital for reasons of environmental protection and in support of economic development. The National Development Plan 2000 – 2006 highlights as a key priority the need for investment in such infrastructure given the significant strain being placed on existing provision as a result of rapid economic growth.

7.5.2 The County Council recognises the need for a long term sustainable approach to waste management and supports the governments policy statement “*Changing Our Ways*” (1998). A Waste Management Plan has been prepared and is being implemented. The County Council supports the South East Regional Waste Management Strategy in so far as it does not conflict with the Council’s adopted policy on waste management and will actively co-operate with the Regional Authority in the areas of waste minimisation, re-use and recycling. The County Council considers that waste to energy incineration is unacceptable in its present form. New technologies will be examined as they become available.

Waste will be disposed of in an environmentally safe manner and in accordance with the Polluter Pays Principle.

7.5.3 A recycling scheme is in operation in the County based on collection points located in towns, villages and settlements.

7.5.4 The County Council is aware of the need to continue to provide for future demand for municipal solid waste landfill. This may involve the extension of the existing site or the development of new facilities.

7.5.5 Litter continues to be a problem in both urban and rural areas with potentially negative impacts on quality of life, tourism and inward investment. A Litter Management Plan is being implemented. The County Council will enforce

litter prevention legislation and support the various anti-litter campaigns at local level.

7.5.6 In meeting its responsibilities and obligations with regard to waste management, the County Council will:

- *implement the Waste Management Plan for County Wexford*
- *provide a suitable municipal solid waste landfill site to meet the needs of the County*
- *have regard to its duty under Section 38(1) of the 1996 Waste Management Act to provide and operate, or arrange for the provision and operation of such facilities as may be necessary, for the recovery and disposal of household waste arising within its functional area*
- *promote and encourage waste minimisation as a priority; re-use and recycling initiatives will be implemented if waste cannot be prevented; if waste cannot be re-used or recycled it will be disposed of in a manner which will minimise environmental pollution, is economical and technically possible and such that the Polluter Pays Principle will be applied. This approach is described as the Waste Hierarchy*
- *provide transfer stations to facilitate transport to new or to the existing waste disposal facilities*
- *continue to maintain to the highest environmental standards existing waste disposal facilities*
- *ensure that facilities are operated to high standards so that the cost of protecting local communities and the environment is properly reflected in the charges made to waste producers*
- *require that proposals for landfill sites demonstrate the need for additional landfill capacity; this need to be assessed by the*

The Waste Hierarchy

This approach favours proposals which move the management of waste up the hierarchy. The prevention and reduction of waste will be achieved through co-operation with industry and various other interest groups and agencies. National or Regional targets will be used for achieving rates of waste reduction, re-use or recycling. The Local Authority will continue to inform the public on the necessities of waste management. Public information which is a stated objective of Agenda 21 can be initiated through education programmes or establishing Clean Up Our Environment Action Groups.

availability of facilities to manage the waste higher up the Waste Hierarchy and whether the proposal would prejudice the infill and restoration of existing sites

- *seek to ensure that waste is treated or disposed of as close to the point of generation as possible*
- *consider locating waste disposal facilities at appropriate sites which have minimum impact on public amenities; location of these facilities will be in accordance with EPA guidance*
- *consider locating waste disposal facilities on industrial and agricultural lands where the nuisance and hazards caused to nearby land uses will be minimised*
- *pursue alternative means of waste disposal including directing waste to composting, or biological processes*
- *restrict and control private and unauthorised disposal sites and prohibit unauthorised dumping*
- *decommission the existing landfill site under strict environmental regulations and encourage appropriate re-use of closed sites*
- *consider permitting the location of scrapyards, vehicle dismantlers, materials recovery facilities, transfer and storage facilities on industrial lands provided they do not have an adverse impact on surrounding land uses and do not prejudice the proper planning and sustainable development of the area*
- *require developers to submit for the approval of the Local Authority details of how surplus construction materials will be disposed of prior to the commencement of development*
- *vigorously implement and adhere to the provisions of the Litter Pollution Act 1997*
- *prepare a County Sludge Management Plan*
- *ensure that proposals for waste disposal have no significant adverse impact on the landscape, agriculture, nature conservation or amenity values, that such effects can be mitigated to an acceptable degree or any such impact is outweighed by the particular need for the development*

- *co-operate with other agencies in the planning, organisation, authorisation and supervision of the disposal of hazardous waste*

7.6 Roads

7.6.1 The development of an efficient strategic transport and communications system facilitating the movement of people, goods and services is essential to the future economic and social development of the County. The County Council's long term objective is the development of an integrated sustainable system involving road, rail, bus, cycling and walking delivered by a range of providers and operators, both public and private. Having regard to existing infrastructural bottlenecks, the heavy reliance on roads and the lack of realistic alternative networks, investment in roads development will continue to be a priority over the plan period.

7.6.2 An integrated road network based on the National Routes linked to Regional and County Roads will offer major benefits to the County as a whole and to the regional and national economies including:

- *supporting links to the main urban areas, towns and ports in the Region*
- *improvements in road safety and maintenance of road capacity*
- *improvements in the quality of life of people living in towns and villages through the provision of by-passes and traffic calming*
- *fostering rural development, diversification, natural resource development and tourism*
- *reducing isolation and social exclusion*

National Roads

7.6.3 Significant investment funds will be made available through the National Development Plan 2000 – 2006 for national roads development with an emphasis on the completion of the Trans-European Networks (TENS*) and major inter urban routes. A number of major projects are identified for County Wexford including:

- *further major improvements on National Primary Routes –*
N11 Wexford/Dublin (Euroroute 1)
N30 Enniscorthy/New Ross
N25 Rosslare Harbour/New Ross (Euroroute 2)
- *further improvements on National Secondary Routes –*
N80 Bunclody/Enniscorthy

**TENS is a designated network of major routes throughout the European Union providing north-south and east-west communications*

7.6.4 In facilitating the completion of the National Road network the County Council will:

- *co-operate with the National Roads Authority in implementing an investment programme to provide an integrated national road network in the County to the highest environmental and traffic standards including the by-passing of towns and villages where necessary and appropriate*
- *safeguard the carrying capacity of the National Road network through the restriction of the number of access points to the network and of the significant intensification of use of existing access points except in very clearly defined limited circumstances*

National Roads Need Study 1999 – County Wexford

The National Roads Authority carried out a comprehensive assessment of the works required to bring the national road network as a whole up to the necessary standards and to maintain these standards as traffic volumes increase.

This study identified the following schemes for County Wexford with an investment of £126m over the next 10 years.

<u>Route</u>	<u>Scheme</u>	<u>Phasing</u>
N11	Enniscorthy Bypass	2000-2004
	Gorey Bypass	2000-2004
	Gorey/Arklow	2000-2004
	Enniscorthy/Gorey	2005-2009
N25	New Ross Bypass	2000-2004
	Barntown/ New Ross	2005-2009
	Rosslare Hbr/ Wexford	2000-2009
N30	Enniscorthy/ Clonroche	2000-2004

- *preserve free from development proposed road realignment/improvement lines and associated corridors where such development would prejudice the implementation of National Roads Authority or County Council plans*
- *ensure that development proposals are compatible with the effective management and safe movement of traffic on the National Road network*
- *support the strategy outlined in the Operational Programme for Transport 1994 – 1999 on Strategic Corridors*

7.6.5 As part of the overall National Roads development programme, it is an objective to carry out a number of specific projects during the plan period:

- *to construct a dual carriageway on the N11 from the County boundary to Gorey to include the Gorey by-pass*
- *to advance the detailed design of major national road improvements between Gorey and Enniscorthy (N11)*
- *to construct a by-pass of Enniscorthy (N11/N30)*
- *to complete the realignment and improvement of the N25 between Wexford and New Ross*
- *to carry out realignment and improvement works on the N30 between Enniscorthy and New Ross, including a by-pass of Clonroche*
- *to provide a new National Primary Road link to Rosslare Harbour (N25).*
- *to provide an additional Barrow River crossing and by-pass of New Ross (N25)*

7.6.6 In addition it is an objective of the Council:

- *to advance planning for the construction of a dual carriageway from the Gorey by-pass to Rosslare Harbour*
- *to provide a dual carriageway by-pass to the N25 at New Ross which will include an additional river crossing at New Ross.*

Control of Development on National Roads

7.6.7 The National Road network enables the efficient and safe movement of traffic over long distances. The network contributes to national, regional and local economic prosperity by providing strategic links to the main towns in the County and outside the County, to the main national urban centres, Gateways and ports. National policy as outlined in the National Development Plan 2000 – 2006 emphasises the primary role of these roads in the transport system.

7.6.8 If these roads are to fulfil their primary function in an era of rapid growth in car ownership and freight movement, it will be necessary to limit the number of accesses and junctions to the network. Failure to do so would result in:

- *creation of traffic hazard and congestion*
- *reduction in carrying capacity*
- *premature obsolescence*
- *inadequate return on public investment*

7.6.9 In the interests of proper planning and sustainable development therefore it will be the policy of the County Council to:

- *prohibit development requiring direct access to or entailing the intensification of use of existing accesses onto the National Road network in the County in order to foster road safety, ensure the free flow of traffic, prevent a reduction in network carrying capacity and avoid the dissipation of public capital investment*
- *limit the number of junctions onto the National Road network*
- *prohibit development on the National Road network even if no direct vehicular access is proposed to avoid hazardous parking and pedestrian movement on National Roads*

7.6.10 This policy will not apply in the following circumstances and locations:

National Roads in Towns and Villages

While there will be a presumption in favour of appropriate development in towns and villages and within the 30 mph speed limits, the County Council will seek to minimise the number of individual access points and to encourage shared or communal accesses serving infill development or access to a minor road if available and feasible.

- *within the 30 m.p.h. speed limits of towns, villages and settlements*
- *farmers and their sons and daughters, either working full time on their own viable land holding or in the area, building a dwellinghouse for their own use and occupancy on family land*
- *a retirement dwelling for a farmer*
- *a second dwelling on a Council plot or Land Commission plot of up to two acres for a member of the immediate family provided that the applicant can satisfy the Council of his/her essential need to live in that location.*
- *large and/or strategic industrial development related to the development of a rural resource, e.g., agricultural diversification, forestry, which can only locate at a site specific rural location; the proposed development should also have employment potential which would benefit local rural people*
- *a dwellinghouse to serve an established commercial or industrial enterprise or a proposed strategic industrial rural resource development*
- *the development of lands for the provision of necessary physical infrastructure to serve towns, villages and settlements in accordance with the Council's overall Rural Development Strategy.*

7.6.11 The following conditions/considerations will apply to the above policy exceptions:

- *a reasonable alternative site with access to a minor road is not available*
- *an existing access is used where possible and improved as necessary*
- *the development can be carried out without creating a traffic hazard*
- *the development can comply with other planning, environmental and siting criteria and does not conflict with the objectives of the plan*

Regional Roads and County Roads

7.6.12 The Regional Roads play a vital role by:

- *providing indispensable strategic linkages to the national network and other Counties*
- *serving rural areas and helping to foster rural development and diversification, indigenous industry, local enterprise, agriculture, agri-business and tourism*
- *improving accessibility to more remote areas thereby reducing social exclusion*
- *fostering the vitality of towns and villages through which they pass*

7.6.13 Planned investment will specifically enhance the role and capacity of the network. In order to secure maximum return from this investment, to promote public safety and maintain their strategic importance, it will be the policy of the County Council:

- *to discourage development requiring direct access to the following heavily trafficked sections of Regional Road:*
 - *R733 from Wexford to Arthurstown to Ballyhack.*
 - *R739 from N25 junction to Kilmore Quay*
 - *R741 from Wexford to Gorey*

7.6.14 This policy will not apply in the following locations and circumstances:

- *within the development boundaries/built up areas of towns, villages or settlements or within the development area boundary of a town or village as defined in a Town and Village Plan*
- *in areas where a speed limit of 30 – 40 m.p.h. applies*
- *farmers and their sons or daughters proposing to build a dwelling house for their own use provided the dwelling is located in close proximity to the farm complex or to an existing cluster of development*

- *infill sites in an existing cluster of development*
- *sub-division of dwellinghouse sites to provide a dwelling for a son or daughter of the original site owner for their own use*
- *if an existing means of access is being used*

7.6.15 Development requiring direct access to all Regional Roads will be considered on its own merits.

Access to Roads Generally

7.6.16 New vehicular accesses to all roads, where acceptable in principle, will be controlled to prevent the creation of traffic hazard, to ensure the safety and free flow of traffic and to protect pedestrians. Communal or grouped entrances are preferable to a multiplicity of single entrances. In assessing development proposals, the County Council will have regard to a number of factors including:

- *the nature, scale and layout of the proposed development*
- *the category, design and capacity of the road network including speed values*
- *access details including design, location and proposals to maintain existing road drainage*
- *arrangements for on-site parking, turning, loading/unloading*
- *availability and adequacy of sightlines at the entrance*

Sightlines

7.6.17 Indicative sightline requirements at vehicular entrances are as follows:

<u>Road Category</u>	<u>Sight Distance</u>
National Roads	230m
Regional Roads Class 1*	220m
Regional Roads Class 2	135m
County Roads	65m

*Class 1 relates to the following Regional Roads:

- R733 Wexford – Arthurstown/Ballyhack
- R739 N25 junction – Kilmore Quay
- R741 Wexford – Gorey

New development will normally be required to comply with these standards. Each proposed development will be carefully assessed and sight distance requirements may vary depending on the location and the nature and scale of the development. The assessment of sight distance requirements will have due regard to national Roads Standards, referred to as NRA DMBRA and DMRB Road Geometry Handbook.

Roadside Services

7.6.18 Consideration will be given to the provision of these facilities where there is clear evidence of need and where traffic and environmental problems and impact on the local retailing structure can be minimised. Facilities will generally not be acceptable in rural areas where the maximum speed limit applies. Suitable sites for these facilities will be considered during the plan period.

Parking/Loading, Access and Circulation

7.6.19 Car Parking Requirements, Layout and Design

- *The layout and design of roads in housing developments shall have regard to the "Traffic Management Guidelines" issued jointly by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, the Department of Transport and the Dublin Transportation Office.*
- *Requirements for numbers of car parking spaces are set out in **Table 4**.*
- *In dealing with planning applications for change of use or for replacement buildings, allowance will be made for the former site use in calculating the car parking requirements generated by the new development as extra.*
- *Where the provision of on-site parking is not possible, the County Council will require a financial contribution towards the provision of car parking.*
- *Parking and service spaces must be located on site so as to prevent road/street obstruction, and should be located where possible to the rear and side of buildings and in such a manner to ensure minimal injury to the amenity of adjoining premises.*
- **The basic dimensions for the layout of car parking areas are as follows:**

Table 3

<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>WIDTH</u>
Minimum size of parking bay	5.0m x 2.5m
A minimum width of aisle for 90 degree parking	6.1m
A minimum width of aisle for 60 degree parking	4.9m
A minimum width of aisle for 45 degree parking	3.6m
A minimum width of aisle for less than 45 degree parking and for parallel parking	3.6m

- *Where parking is allowed in general view, adequate screening or landscaping must be provided to reduce its impact*

- *In addition to the general car parking standards, service parking space will be required for vehicles necessarily involved in the operation of business including the delivery and collection of goods, the carrying out of repairs and maintenance*
- *Parking facilities to accommodate people with disabilities must be provided. Bays should be located as close as possible to the entrance to a premises and must be clearly visible, sign posted and marked with the relevant international symbol. Each bay must have a minimum size of 5.0m x 3.3m*

Table 4

Carparking Standards

Development	Central Areas	Other Areas
Dwelling	2 per dwelling	2 per dwelling
Apartment/Flat	1 per bedroom	1 space per bedroom
Guest House/ B&B	1 space per bedroom plus one space	1 space per bedroom plus one space
Hotel (excluding public areas)	2 spaces per bedroom	1-2 spaces per bedroom
Hostel	1 space per 60sq m dormitory	1 space per 40sq m dormitory
Caravan/Camping Site	1 space per pitch	1 space per pitch
Shopping: Retail Floorspace	1 space per 30-50sq m	1 space per 10-30sq m
Factory: Retail Floorspace		1 space per 40sq m
Offices: Gross Floorspace	1 space per 50sq m	1 space per 50sq m
Banks: Gross Floorspace	1 space per 50sq m	1 space per 50sq m
Surgeries	3-4 spaces per consultants room	3-4 spaces per consultants room
Public Houses Public Area	1 space per 25sq m	1 space per 25 sq.m.
Restaurants	1 space per 50sq m	1 space per 10 -20sq m
Dance Halls Public Area	1 space per 25sq m	1 space per 5-10sq m
Cinemas, Theatres, Stadia	1 space 3-10 seats	1 space 3-10 seats
Churches / Church Hall	1 space 3-20 seats	1 space 3-20 seats
Hospitals / Nursing homes	1 space per 1-2 beds	1 space per 1-2 beds
Man. Ind./ Light Ind.: Gross Floorspace	1 space per 50-80sq m	1 space per 50-80sq m
Showrooms: Gross Floorspace	1 space per 50sq m	1 space per 50sq m
Warehouses: Gross Floorspace	1 space per 100-200 sq m	1 space per 100-200sq m
Amuse./ Entertain.: Gross Floorspace	1 space per 50sq m	1 space per 30sq m
Conference Centres: Public Areas	1 space per 50sq m	1 space per 20-25sq m
Garages	1 space per 50sq m	1 space per 30sq m
Sports Clubs, Grounds	1 space per 15sq m & 6 spaces for each pitch, 2 for each court	1 space per 15sq m & 6 spaces for each pitch, 2 for each court
Library	1 space per 100sq m	1 space per 100sq m
Funeral Home	10 spaces	20 spaces
School	1 space per classroom	1.5 spaces per classroom
Swimming Pool	5 spaces per 100sq m	10 spaces per 100sq m
Golf Course/Pitch & Putt	4 spaces per hole	4 spaces per hole
Bowling Alley	2 spaces per lane	3 spaces per lane
Creche/ Playschool/ Nurseries	One per four children plus one per employee	One per four children plus one per employee

7.7 Renewable Energy

7.7.1 The County Council recognises the need to reduce dependence on the use of fossil fuel for energy generation, and supports the development of renewable resources. This approach accords with European Union and National energy strategies. The National Development Plan 2000 – 2006 acknowledges the potential that the development of alternative energies has to contribute to sustainable development, and allocates significant investment funds towards their continued development.

7.7.2 County Wexford is recognised as having potential to provide energy from renewable sources. In particular, areas such as the exposed south east and the upland areas to the north west, have annual mean wind speeds considered suitable for commercial wind energy generation. There is also the potential for offshore wind energy generation. The scope for development of other sources such as solar, wave, tidal and geothermal is limited at present.

7.7.3 There is a strong correlation between areas suitable for wind energy generation and vulnerable, sensitive coastal and upland landscapes. The County Council's planning policy must therefore seek to achieve a balance between the wider environmental benefits occurring from wind energy and the potential for adverse impacts on the local environment and community. The cumulative impact of a number of wind farms in close proximity is also a major concern, as is the impact created by ancillary infrastructure particularly poles and cables from the development to substations.

7.7.4 Having regard to those considerations, the County Council will:

- *support, in principle, the development of renewable energy sources*
- *have regard to “Wind Farm Development – Guidelines for Planning Authorities”, Department of the Environment, 1996*
- *subject all wind energy development proposals to vigorous appraisal with regard to the impact of the development on the landscape, nature*

conservation, the historic environment and the amenity of the area; any adverse impact arising will be balanced against both the need for the development and alternative sites

- *prepare over the plan period a countywide **Wind Energy Development Framework** which will seek to identify how wind energy development could be accommodated in the County utilising the least sensitive locations, and will set out guidance on location, layout and design having regard to local environmental conditions*
- *require wind farm developments to locate outside vulnerable and sensitive landscapes and avoiding also areas located in proximity to scenic routes where development would detract significantly from the appreciation of these areas*
- *prohibit wind turbines in locations, where, in combination with other turbines, they would have a significant adverse effect on the character of the wider landscape*
- *have regard in evaluating development proposals to the Landscape Protection and Coastal Development Policies*
- *require the undergrounding, where feasible, of powerlines between wind turbine locations and substations*
- *have regard to the following considerations when evaluating development proposals; visual impact and mitigation proposals; noise levels vis-à-vis residential properties; construction impacts; decommissioning and site restoration; materials; impact on the environment; alternative sites considered*
- *facilitate applicants/developers in scoping Environmental Impact Statements*

7.8 Energy - General

The County Council recognises the importance to the County in economic development terms of connecting to the national gas network and will pursue this as an objective with An Bord Gais and other agencies. Potential links to the gas network in the U.K. will also be examined.

7.9 Electricity Transmission Lines

7.9.1 The County Council will seek the undergrounding of all lines where they:

- *traverse areas designated as vulnerable or scenic landscapes*
- *detract from the amenity value and integrity of scenic routes*
- *interfere with or damage heritage items, protected structures, sites and areas of archaeological importance or potential*
- *interfere with or damage areas and sites of nature conservation value particularly Natural Heritage Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas*

7.10 Air Quality

7.10.1 Air pollution arising from the burning of fossil fuels is not at present a major problem in County Wexford. The County Council will continue to maintain this situation by enforcing the provisions of the **Air Pollution Act, 1987**, and over the longer term by pursuing policies which protect ambient air quality including:

- *supporting public transport and non-motorised transportation as a means to reduce locally generated air emissions.*
- *protecting significant tree groups and other vegetation types and encouraging landscaping and tree planting as a means of air purification and the filtering of suspended particles*

7.11 Telecommunications

7.11.1 Rapid development in telecommunications technology is giving rise to significant socio-economic changes, creating new industries and transforming the way existing businesses operate. The technology has the capability to change traditional land-use patterns and urban - rural relationships creating opportunities for:

- *home working in rural areas*
- *life long learning*
- *reduced need for commuting with consequent reduction in car journeys*

7.11.2 National policy as expressed in the National Development Plan 2000 – 2006 highlights the need to develop the Irish communications sector so that it ranks in the top decile of OECD countries in terms of service range, quality, availability and price.

7.11.3 County Wexford is strategically placed to avail of the advantages of improved telecommunications having regard to existing and proposed links to the United Kingdom and Europe and its developing broadband capability. A modern telecommunications system in the County will have major spin-offs in terms of attracting inward investment and facilitating the development and expansion of tourism

7.11.4 Developments in this sector, have land use implications, particularly in the siting of antennae and support structures. While supporting and encouraging the development of telecommunications, the

County Council is aware of the need to achieve a balance between accommodating the physical infrastructure and protecting the health of the community and vital environmental resources.

7.11.5 In seeking to achieve this balance the County Council will:

Telecommunications Regulation with Regard to Non-Ionising Radiation

The Office of the Director of Telecommunications Regulation was established under the Telecommunications (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1996. The Director has responsibility under the 1996 Act for licensing the use of radio frequencies for radio, telephony and broadcasting. The policy of the office is to include a standard provision, where appropriate, in all such licences which obliges the licensee to ensure that non-ionising radiation levels from installations are within the limits specified by the guidelines published by the IRPA in association with the World Health Organisation in 1988.

The Director carries out annual audits of the procedures of operators to ensure that emission levels are not exceeded.

- have regard to “*Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures – Guidelines for Planning Authorities*” Department of the Environment, 1996
- ensure that provision for development in connection with telecommunications is made in ways which will maximise the use of existing masts and sites so as to limit the impact of development on the landscape, giving priority to the protection of visually vulnerable or sensitive landscapes and scenic routes and on sites and areas of nature conservation value
- adopt a presumption against the erection of antennae in proximity to residential areas, schools or community facilities, structures of historical or architectural interest and areas and sites of archaeological importance

7.11.6 To facilitate the evaluation of development proposals for the erection of antennae and support structures, applicants/developers/operators will be required to:

- submit a reasoned justification as to the need for the particular development at the proposed location in the context of the operators overall plans to develop a network in County Wexford and contiguous counties
- indicate what other sites or locations in County Wexford were considered.
- submit evidence of consultations, if any, with other operators with regard to the sharing of sites and/or support structures
- submit proposals to mitigate the visual impact of the proposed development including the construction of access roads, additional poles and structures
- furnish a statement of compliance with the International Radiation Protection Association (IRPA) Guidelines or the equivalent European Pre-Standard 50166-2

7.12 Recreation, Community Facilities and Services

7.12.1 The range and quality of social, recreational and cultural facilities and amenities have a significant role to play in the social and economic development of towns, villages and rural areas.

7.12.2 The County Council will support and facilitate the provision of new and the improvement and upgrading of existing community facilities and will protect and improve amenities and recreation assets in the interests of tourism, enjoyment and education for residents and visitors alike. The County Council will co-operate with private and commercial interests, community and voluntary groups and state agencies in ensuring an equitable distribution of facilities at locations convenient to where people live and work. To implement these policies, the County Council will:

- *prepare a **Recreational, Sports and Amenity Development Strategy** for the County during the Plan period;*
- *seek to achieve an integrated hierarchy of open space areas, woodlands and landscaped areas within walking distance of residential areas and in new development; this will require a co-ordinated, planned approach in consultation with developers and local communities to retain and protect large areas of structural open spaces and to provide a range of local open space, play areas and private garden space;*
- *resist the redevelopment for other uses of open space, recreation and amenity lands, whether in public or private ownership, unless alternative provision for open space and recreational facilities can be made at an acceptable and convenient location;*
- *seek to provide opportunities for more active lifestyles by maintaining and improving recreational facilities and developing walking and cycling networks linked to rural areas;*
- *encourage the use of the County's high quality natural and physical environment, coastal and rural landscapes and amenities for active and*

passive recreation while avoiding overuse and adverse environmental impact to these resources;

- *continue the development of the Coastal Path and co-operate with Cospóir and other interested bodies in providing linkages to other national long distance walking routes in adjoining counties;*
- *develop, in co-operation with landowners and statutory bodies, a network of local walking routes based on hill, river and forest walks, sites of nature conservation value and sites and buildings of historic and architectural importance;*
- *preserve and protect existing rights-of-way and access routes and investigate the creation of new rights-of-way where appropriate in consultation with landowners and statutory bodies*
- *identify and promote cycleways throughout the county;*
- *consider the preparation of a Management Strategy for high amenity areas including the Blackstairs Mountains and hills to the north-west of the county in order to maximise their economic, recreational, amenity and educational benefits and ensure their long term conservation;*
- *promote the recreational use of the county's rivers and coastal zone while protecting these areas from development which would detract from their amenity value and recreational capacity;*
- *ensure that all community and recreational buildings and facilities, open spaces and amenity areas to which the public have access provide for the needs of people with disabilities and the elderly and work with support groups and organisations to ensure that all facilities are available to and enjoyed by disabled and able bodied persons alike;*
- *ensure that the needs of children and young people are*

Meeting Recreational Needs of Children and Young People

Providing for the needs of children and young people including the need for safe access to play and community facilities is a major priority.

The aim of the County Council is the promotion of a child friendly County through:

- recognising that children play throughout the whole of their environment and that residential areas should include traffic calming and other traffic safety measures, safe routes to school and footpath networks linking open spaces with public and community facilities.
- protecting, retaining and developing natural areas within and adjacent to residential areas which have a diversity of natural play opportunities.
- encouraging a hierarchy of open spaces from small unequipped playlots near to houses and local parks.
- providing in consultation with young people, purpose-designed meeting places for teenagers.
- supporting young peoples involvement in community developments, the arts, sports and environmental projects.
- supporting community based pre-school, after-school clubs and holiday play schemes.
- developing a policy for children with the community and with statutory service providers in order to optimise the potential for quality play opportunities for children

met in the provision of recreational and community facilities.

- *have regard to the requirements of “**Childcare Facilities – Draft Guidelines for Planning Authorities**”, Department of the Environment and Local Government May 2000.*
- *ensure that school and college sites are made available in accordance with the requirements of the relevant educational authorities either by way of agreement or otherwise in phase with residential development taking place in the area;*
- *promote the provision of a suitable third level institution and co-operate with other agencies in establishing outreach centres of third level institutions in the County;*
- *facilitate the provision of training facilities and encourage greater access to educational facilities at all levels within the community;*
- *promote and encourage community development throughout the County and work with community and voluntary groups in providing a range of recreational and community facilities and amenities;*
- *recognise the right of local communities to contribute to the development and improvement of their areas and support this by:*
 - *providing environmental and planning advice and information*
 - *contributing to schools environmental education programmes*
 - *engaging in public consultation*
- *strongly support the social, recreational, employment and tourism role of the arts and culture in the County;*
- *promote the development of the library service, including the provision of new facilities at Wexford, Gorey and Bunclody;*
- *support the development of one-stop shops throughout the County to provide an efficient and accessible service to the public;*
- *encourage and support outdoor musical events at locations where they will not detract from residential and other amenities and do not give rise to traffic hazard or public health nuisance;*
- *encourage the provision of wet weather facilities and indoor facilities and to require developers to contribute towards the provision of these facilities.*

Fire Service

7.12.3 The County Council Fire Service is a vital component in the range of infrastructure serving the community. The County Council will continue its programme of developing the service both operationally and in its fire prevention role. A suitable site for the new Fire Services headquarters will be identified during the plan period.

Cemeteries

7.12.4 The County Council in association with church authorities will facilitate the development of cemeteries to cater for the needs of the County. Suitable sites will normally be identified through the Town, Environs and Village Development Plans process. The County Council will also seek to maintain and improve the appearance of closed cemeteries.

7.13 Public Art

7.13.1 During the Plan period the Council will prepare in conjunction with the Public Art Working Group a framework for the provision of Public Art in County Wexford. This framework will aim to:

- establish an overall strategy for the provision of Public Art throughout the County.
- formulate a funding scheme from both public and private resources that is both realistic and equitable.
- ensure that the framework is implemented during the life of the Plan.

7.14 Catering For People With Disabilities

In the design of buildings and the layout of development to which the public could be expected to have frequent access, special consideration will be given to the accommodation of people with disabilities, the elderly and others who may be temporarily impaired. Access requirements for these groups must be

incorporated into the design of buildings, public spaces, car parking, footpaths and general facilities and services. Developers must have regard to the criteria set out in the following in the preparation of development proposals:

- *Part VI of the **Building Regulations**, 1997*
- ***Access for the Disabled – Minimum Design Criteria** published by the National Rehabilitation Board (or to amendments which may be published from time to time)*
- ***Buildings for Everyone – Access and Use for All the Citizens**, National Rehabilitation Board, 1998*

7.15 Development Contributions

The County Council may require financial contributions towards the capital cost of providing infrastructure, public lighting, services and utilities. These include roads, footpaths, car parking, traffic management, drainage, wastewater treatment, water supply and open space. The County Council may set a time limit within which contributions must be paid and may allow payment on an instalment basis where appropriate.

7.16 Bonds

To ensure that permitted development is satisfactorily completed the County Council will require, as a condition of planning permission, the lodgement of appropriate security bonds. The amount of the security bond will be as determined by the County Council. The bond will remain in place until all works are satisfactorily completed or until the development is taken in charge.

Chapter 8

Conservation

Introduction

8.1 It's natural and built environment are part of County Wexford's distinctive heritage. The coastal and rural landscape, the areas of nature conservation value and the sites, monuments and structures of historic and architectural interest are of intrinsic value while contributing to the quality of life of the community and economic development. Heritage resources are increasingly subject to development pressure and change. The management of this change and the preservation of the County's distinctive character are key priorities. The County Council is committed to development which allows also for the wise use and conservation of vital assets and resources.

8.2 Protecting the Archaeological Heritage

8.2.1 Archaeological remains are a crucial part of County Wexford's heritage of great cultural and scientific importance. They are evidence of past development and of human interaction with the landscape, helping to interpret to-days landscape. These finite non-renewable resources must be protected and maintained. The planning process is an essential mechanism for ensuring this protection. The County Council will play it's role in seeking to protect archaeological remains in situ wherever this is feasible. The importance and value of the wider historic landscape and environment, including battlefields is also recognised. The County Council will seek to protect and maintain these sites and areas wherever possible.

8.2.2 In seeking to protect the County's archaeological heritage the County Council will:

- *seek to preserve and maintain known existing archaeological monuments as set out in 'The Record of Monuments and Places' and to safeguard the integrity of the setting of archaeological sites.*
- *have regard to the basic principles of national policy on the protection of the archaeological heritage set out in 'Framework and Principles for the*

Protection of the Archaeological Heritage’ Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and The Islands, 1999.

- *exercise a presumption in favour of avoidance of development impacts on the archaeological heritage and seek the preservation in situ of archaeological sites and monuments as the preferred option*
- *protect the following areas designated as being of Archaeological Potential, see also, Map No. 2:*

Bannow	Ferns	Mayglass
Clonmines	Ferrycarrig	New Ross
Courtown	Fethard-on-Sea	Old Ross
Edermine	Great Island	Taghmon
Enniscorthy	Gorey	Wexford
- *protect the special attributes of the historic landscape including battlefields*
- *facilitate public access to the National Monuments in State care and Local Authority ownership in the County*

National Monuments Act, 1994

Section 12 (3) of the National Monuments act 1994 provides that where the owner or occupier (other than the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands) of a monument or place included in the Record, or any person proposes, to carry out, or to cause or permit the carrying out of any work at or in relation to such a monument or place, he or she shall give notice in writing to the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands of the proposal to carry out work and shall not, except in the case of urgent necessity and with the consent of the Minister, commence the work until two months after the giving of notice.

8.2.3 In support of these policies, the County Council will:

- *ensure that details of development proposals, including refurbishment and restoration works, within the Areas of Archaeological Potential and within close proximity to monuments as set out in **The Record of Monuments and Places** are referred on receipt to the Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands (National Monuments Service) for observations and recommendations and to have regard to such observations and recommendations and those of other interested bodies before arriving at a planning decision;*
- *ensure that local authority infrastructure development works including water, sanitary services, road realignment and new road construction within the Areas of Archaeological Potential as listed above or in close proximity to monuments as set out in **The Record of Monuments and Places** are referred to the Department of Arts,*

*Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands (National Monuments Service)
for comment, observation and recommendation;*

- *require the developer to submit a report prepared by a suitably qualified archaeologist on the archaeological implications of a proposed development involving works which could impact on archaeological remains;*
- *impose planning conditions in appropriate circumstances requiring:*
 - *professional archaeological supervision of excavations*
 - *funding by the applicant of archaeological assessment, monitoring, testing or excavation of the site and submissions of a report thereon*
 - *preservation of all or part of any archaeological remains on site*
- *increase efforts to secure funding for the upkeep of monuments in the local authority ownership, particularly those of significant heritage value, which would be of the greatest interest to the general public.*

8.3 Nature Conservation

8.3.1 County Wexford has a rich heritage of habitats of nature conservation value containing a wide range of plants and animals. This biodiversity is threatened by development pressure, human activity and intervention. A sustainable approach requires that the stock of wildlife habitats and species should be protected for the benefit of present and future generations. The more important and unique habitats are subject to national and European Union designation as proposed Natural Heritage Areas, candidate Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas. In addition to its rich bio-diversity, County Wexford has several sites of geological and geomorphological interest which must be protected.

Promoting Biodiversity

Biodiversity is the term used to describe the variety of flora and fauna in the environment. The Convention on Biological Diversity was initiated at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (The Rio 'Earth Summit') and received 168 signatures, including Ireland. The Convention was inspired by the world community's growing commitment to sustainable development. Nature conservation is one of the main activities contributing to the maintenance of biodiversity.

8.3.2 The County Council recognises that areas of nature conservation value are not confined to designated sites and of the need to protect against the cumulative impact of development on the wide network of natural systems which make up the environment.

8.3.3 The County Council supports the conservation of the abundance and diversity of habitats characteristic of County Wexford and their dependent plant and animal communities and will facilitate and co-operate with national agencies, local and community groups in their protection. In general, if uncertainty exists regarding the potential impact of a proposed development, full account will be taken of the ‘Precautionary Principle’, and the proposed development will be resisted unless or until its effects are more clearly understood. To secure the implementation of this policy the County Council will:

- *prohibit development which would damage or threaten the integrity of sites of international or national importance, designated for their habitat/wildlife or geological/geomorphological importance including the proposed Natural Heritage Areas, candidate Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and Statutory Nature Reserves unless the County Council is satisfied that:*
 - *there is no alternative solution*
 - *there are strong reasons of over-riding public interest for the development.*
- *work together with statutory bodies and voluntary conservation groups and landowners to increase the number, size, quality and diversity of natural habitats to be safeguarded and*

Site Designations
Special Areas of Conservation

These are areas of special importance to wildlife habitats and species, and would form part of the Irish contribution to the EU Natura 2000 network. Natura 2000 is an EU network of ecologically important sites which Member States are required to establish under the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC). The Directive lists priority habitats and species which must be conserved.

The European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1997 (Statutory Instrument 94/97) transposed the Directive into national legislation in February, 1997. These Regulations place the responsibility for protecting sites on the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands.

Under the terms of the Directive, any plan or project likely to have a significant adverse impact on a site must be subject to an assessment of its implications for the site.

Special Protection Areas

Member states of the EU are required under the EU Birds Directive (79/409/EEC) to seek to protect the habitats of certain categories of birds. This is to be achieved by creating protected areas, managing habitats and a range of other measures. The Birds Directive has been implemented by orders declaring Nature Reserves and by various other regulations under the European Commission Acts, 1972 – 92.

Natural Heritage Areas

These are sites of national importance by reason of their flora, fauna, geological or physiographic interest. They are part of the strategic network of areas originally identified by An Foras Forbartha as Areas of Scientific Interest.

managed for their nature conservation importance by identifying new sites, as resources allow, and during the consideration of development proposals.

- *Ensure that details of development proposals within or in proximity to designated sites of national or international importance are referred, on receipt, to Duchas – The Heritage Service, for observations and recommendations and to have regard to such observations and recommendations and those of other interested bodies before arriving at a planning decision.*
- *to encourage and assist individuals, environmental organisations and community groups in the conservation of nature.*

PROPOSED NATURAL HERITAGE AREAS – COUNTY WEXFORD	
SITE NAME	SITE NAME
1.Ardamine Woods	23.Forth Mountain
2.Ballyconnigar Sandpits	24.Hook Head
3.Ballyconnigar Upper	25.Keeragh Islands
4.Ballyhack	26.Kilgorman River Marsh
5.Ballykelly Marsh	27.Killoughrim Forest
6.Ballyteige Burrow	28.Kilmuckridge-Tinnaberna Sandhills
7.Ballymoney Strand	29.Kilpatrick Sandhills
8.Ballynabarney Wood	30.Lady’s Island Lake
9.Ballyroe Fen and Lake	31.Leskinfere Church, Clogh
10.Ballyteige Marsh	32.Mountgarrett Riverbank
11.Bannow Bay	33.Oaklands Wood
12.Barrow Estuary	34.Pollmounty River Valley
13.Blackstairs Mountains	35.St. Helen’s Burrow
14.Boley Fen	36.Saltee Islands
15.Bunclody Slate Quarries	37.Raven Point Nature Reserve
16.Cahore Point North Sandhills	38.River Barrow and River Nore
17.Cahore Polders and Dunes	39.Screen Hills
18.Carrhill Wood	40.Slaney River Valley
19.Clone Fox Covert	41.Tacumshin Lake
20.Courtown Dunes and Glen	42.Tintern Abbey
21.Donaghmore Sandhills	43.Wexford Slobs and Harbour
22.Duncannon Sandhills	

<u>SITES OF GEOLOGICAL AND GEOMORPHOLOGICAL INTEREST IN CO WEXFORD*</u>
Baginbun Head Ballymoney Strand Barrystown Booley Bay Booley Bay/Dollar Bay to Bella Vista Caim (Ballyhighland) Camaross Cross Roads Carrigadaggan Clammers Point to Cross Lake Cullenstown Strand to Ballymadder Point Cumer Serpentinite Curracloe Forth Mountain Greenville Hook Head Kilmore Quay Kiltrea Pollshone Head to Cahore Point Rosslare Harbour to Greenore Point Screen Hills Shelmaliere Commons Quarry St Helens Harbour Wood Village

<u>SPECIAL PROTECTION AREAS COUNTY WEXFORD* SITE NAMES</u>
Ballyteige Burrow Bannow Bay Inish and Sgarbheen Keeragh Islands Killag Ladys Island Lake Saltee Islands Tacumshin Lake The Raven Wexford Harbour Wexford Nature Reserve

**to be proposed as or considered as possible Natural Heritage Areas.*

**includes proposed and candidate SPAs*

<u>SPECIAL AREAS OF CONSERVATION* – COUNTY WEXFORD</u>		
<u>SITE NAME</u>	<u>SITE NAME</u>	<u>SITE NAME</u>
Ballyhack	Ballyteige Burrow**	Bannow Bay
Blackstairs Mts	Carnsore Point	Hook Head
Kilmuckridge-Tinnaberna Sandhills**	Kilpatrick Sandhills**	Lady's Island Lake**
Long Bank	Raven Point Nature Reserve	River Barrow/River Nore
Saltee Islands	Screen Hills	Slaney River Valley
Tacumshin Lake**		

**Includes Candidate and Proposed Candidate SACs*

***These areas are or contain priority natural habitat types and are eligible for classification as EU Sites of Community Interest (SCI)*

8.4 Conserving the Built Environment

8.4.1 The historic buildings and structures are symbols of the social, economic and cultural development of County Wexford. They contribute to the distinctive character of settlements and of the rural landscape. Wexford is one of the few remaining counties in Ireland with a significant surviving stock of thatched houses. The County Council is committed to the protection, appreciation and appropriate re-use of this vernacular heritage while seeking to reconcile the needs of, conservation, regeneration and enhancement with economic development.

8.4.2 In support of this policy, the County Council will:

- *seek the preservation and protection of the structures contained in the **Record of Protected Structures** as set out at the end of this Chapter.*
- *safeguard the character and setting of protected structures through control of the design of new development in its vicinity, by the control of the change of use of adjacent land to ensure that there is no adverse material impact and by the preservation of trees and other site features as and where appropriate*
- *resist the demolition of protected structures other than in exceptional circumstances and not unless the County Council is satisfied that every possible effort has been made to continue the present use or find a suitable new use; applications for permission to demolish a protected structure in this context must be accompanied by sufficient information to enable full and proper consideration of the proposal*
- *ensure that proposals for new uses of protected structures are compatible with the character of the*

Protected Structures

A protected structure is a structure that the County Council considers to be of special interest from an architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical point of view. Details of protected structures are entered by the County Council in its Record of Protected Structures which is part of the County Development Plan. Each owner and occupier of a protected structure is legally obliged to ensure that the structure is preserved and that the protected structure or any element of it is not endangered through harm, decay or damage, whether over a short or long period, through neglect or through direct or indirect means.

Planning and Protected Structures

Under the planning system, many minor works to structures do not normally require planning permission. These works are known as exempted development. However, for a protected structure, such works can be carried out without planning permission only if the works would not affect the character of the structure or any element of the structure that contributes to its special interest. Depending on the nature of the structure, planning permission could, for example, be required for interior decorating such as plastering or painting.

building and its setting.

- *prohibit the installation of satellite television dishes or other antennae, signs or other attachments, UPVC or aluminium doors and windows on a protected structure where they would adversely affect its architectural or historic interest or its character ensure that proposals to extend, alter or refurbish a protected structure are sympathetic to the character of the building*
- *consider the designation of Architectural Conservation Areas*
- *promote and encourage the use of **Conservation Guidelines** published by the Department of the Environment and Local Government, promote and encourage the take up of funding available under the **Conservation Grants Scheme***
- *encourage the retention and development of the County's traditional skill base, including building and thatching methods and use of building materials traditional to County Wexford and compile a list of craftsmen with traditional building skills,*
- *provide conservation literature, advice and guidance to the public, prospective developers, voluntary bodies and community groups.*

8.5 The Landscape

8.5.1 The landscape is an important element of the environmental resource base. It contributes to the identity of the County, provides the context for the day to day activities of the rural community and plays a role in economic development by underpinning and attracting tourism. In a period of rapid economic growth, declining agriculture and development pressure it is necessary to ensure that the essential character giving elements of the landscape resource are conserved. Consideration must also be given to the use of the landscape in sustaining rural communities, i.e., allowing necessary social and economic development to take place while maintaining the overall quality of the environment.

8.5.2 The County Council aims to balance development and landscape conservation and to manage development pressure in a positive way by:

- *identifying and protecting vulnerable and sensitive landscapes of strong and distinctive character which have limited capacity to absorb development without fundamentally altering their inherent character*
- *identifying areas which have the capacity to absorb development subject to adhering to high standards of design and siting*
- *encouraging the enhancement and renewal of existing landscapes and the creation of new landscapes*

8.5.3 Areas Designated as Vulnerable (Map No. 3)

These areas include:

- the coastline
- the banks of rivers
- the shorelines of lakes
- the skylines of upland areas
- the headlands and promontories

They represent the County's highest quality scenic landscapes with limited potential to absorb intensive development and need to be given the greatest possible protection. These areas contain the principal features which create and sustain the character and distinctiveness of the surrounding landscape. To be considered for permission, development in the vicinity of these vulnerable areas must be shown not to impinge in any significant way upon their character, integrity or uniformity when viewed from the surroundings. Particular attention should be given to the preservation of the character and distinctiveness of these areas as viewed from scenic routes and the environs of archaeological and historic sites.

8.5.4 Within or adjacent to these areas:

- *any development which would adversely affect the natural beauty of their landscapes will be strongly resisted*
- *small-scale development required to meet the social and economic needs of rural communities will be permitted so long as such development is consistent with the protection of the natural beauty of the landscape*
- *small-scale tourist and outdoor sport and recreational developments will be permitted which are sensitively related to the distinctive landscape character and heritage of the area*
- *large-scale developments will be strongly resisted unless they are proven to be in the national interest, incapable of being located in another area and designed to do as little damage to the environment as practicable*
- *appropriate levels of rural housing will be permitted at suitable locations in accordance with the terms of this development plan*

8.5.5 Where development is permitted, it must be of the highest standard of design and siting, reflecting the traditional character of buildings in the area; all proposals will be subject to a rigorous examination of their environmental implications

8.5.6 Areas Designated as Sensitive (Map.No.3)

These areas include:

- Natural Grassland
- Peat Bogs
- Moors and Heathland
- Transitional Woodland Scrub
- Beaches, dunes and sands
- Estuaries
- Broad Leaved Forest
- Mixed Forest
- Inland and Salt Marshes
- Intertidal Flats

- Water courses/bodies
- Agricultural lands with significant areas of natural vegetation

These areas have a distinctive, homogeneous character dominated by natural processes and represent areas of high scenic amenity. Development in these areas has the potential to impact on the appearance and character of an extensive part of the landscape.

8.5.7 Applications for development must demonstrate an awareness of these inherent limitations by having a very high standard of site selection, siting layout, selection of materials and finishes. Ecological, archaeological, water quality and noise factors also need to be considered insofar as they affect the preservation of the amenities of the area.

8.5.8 Within or adjacent to Sensitive Landscape Areas:

- development which would adversely affect the special scenic quality of the landscape will be strongly resisted
- small-scale development required to meet the social and economic needs of rural communities and small-scale tourist and outdoor sport and recreational development will be permitted provided such development is sensitively related to the distinctive local character of the landscape. Large-scale development will not normally be permitted
- rural housing will be permitted in accordance with the Rural Housing Policy: Area 2

8.5.9 A high standard of design and siting in new development will be required reflecting the traditional character of buildings in the area and the landscape, and using materials sympathetic to the area; the conservation and maintenance of features important to the local landscape including trees, hedgerows, small and large woodlands, watercourses, wetlands, walls, gates and piers will be required.

8.5.10 Areas Designated as Normal (Map No. 3)

These areas include:

- *Pasture land*
- *Complex cultivation patterns*
- *Coniferous plantations*

The greater part of the land area of County Wexford comes within this designation. These areas have the potential to absorb a wide range of new developments subject to compliance with normal planning, design and environmental policies, criteria and procedures. The County Council will seek to ensure that the rural qualities of these areas are protected and that landscape features including trees, woodlands, hedgerows and walls are conserved. New development will be encouraged to locate in the towns and villages in accordance with the overall spatial development strategy. Rural housing will be permitted at appropriate locations.

8.5.11 Areas Designated as Robust (Map No. 3)

These areas include:

- *Continuous Urban Fabric*
- *Discontinuous Urban Fabric*
- *Industrial or Commercial Units*
- *Road and Rail Networks and Associated Land*
- *Sports and Leisure Facilities*

They represent a small proportion of the overall land mass of the County. They relate to the areas of concentrated existing development and infrastructure contained in the towns and villages. Appropriate new development in these areas can reinforce existing desirable land use patterns. Development will be guided in the context of Town, Environs and Village Plans having regard to factors such as density, building lines and heights,

open space and design standards. The overall aim is to ensure that the inherent character of towns and villages is maintained.

8.5.12 Within these areas:

- *new development should sustain and reflect the character of the area*
- *frontages on to the existing streets should reflect the character of the street through careful design and use of materials*
- *development should reflect the character of the townscape generally but fresh approaches to design will be considered.*

8.5.13 Areas of High Amenity

The Council will prepare action plans/management strategies for areas of high amenity including Tara Hill/Ballymoney, Curracloe/Screen/The Raven, Forth Mountain, The Slaney Valley, the River Barrow, the Blackstairs Mountains and hills to the north and north-west of the County and the Hook Peninsula in order to maximise their economic, recreational amenity and educational benefits and ensure their long term conservation.

8.5.14 Creating New Landscapes

Special emphasis will be placed on the creation of new landscapes and the general improvement of the existing landscape by:

- *encouraging and where necessary requiring new development to incorporate major on and off-site landscaping; when considering large scale development, their potential to enhance the visual quality of the landscape will be taken into account*
- *encouraging the conservation and maintenance of features important to local landscapes including trees, hedgerows, stone walls, woodlands, ponds, streams and wetlands*
- *encouraging the removal of eyesores and redundant structures*
- *increasing tree cover by planting new areas of woodland and forest in environmentally acceptable locations*

- *protecting trees and woodlands of particular amenity and nature conservation value and making Tree Preservation Orders where appropriate*
- *encouraging woodland management and participating in tree and hedgerow planting schemes by farmers, community groups and others*
- *resisting development proposals which would result in the loss of trees which make a valuable contribution to the character of the landscape, a settlement or its setting*

8.5.15 Scenic Routes

Scenic routes indicate public roads from which views and prospects of areas of natural beauty and interest can be enjoyed. Sightseeing visitors are more likely to be concentrated along these routes. The onus will be on the applicant/developer seeking permission to develop in the vicinity of a designated scenic route, to demonstrate that the development will not give rise to the destruction or degradation of views towards visually vulnerable features nor significant alterations to the appearance or character of sensitive landscapes. Designated scenic routes to which this policy applies are set out below and on **Map 3 Landscape Policy Areas**.

Route 1

Gorey – North-west to Hollyfort – North –east to Killinierin – North – east to Coolgreany - West to Ballyfad – West to Clonroe Cross Roads – Wicklow Gap – West to Loggan – South-west to Monaseed - Hollyfort.

Route 2

Gorey – North-east to Kilmurry Cross Roads – North-east around Tara Hill via Kildermot Cross Roads – North to Ballylacy Cross Roads – West to N11 at Rogan’s Cross Roads.

Route 3

Gorey – West to Craanford on R725 – North-west to Knockbrandon – West to Ballyellis Cross Roads – South-east to Brideswell and Shrule Cross Roads –

South to Camolin Via Carrigbeg and Boley Cross Roads – North-east to Gorey Via N11.

Route 4

Camolin – North to Shrule Cross Roads/Brideswell – South-west to Askamore – North to Kiltillahan – South to Ferns via Ballytarsna Cross Roads, Bull Ring Cross Roads and Kiltomas Cross Roads – North-East to Camolin on N11.

Route 5

Ballyroeback – West to Bunclody – North east via R746 around Gibbet Hill to Coolmela or Prospect – Knocknalour – South to Ballyroeback.

Route 6

Bunclody – South-east to Scarawalsh via N80 – South to Enniscorthy via N11 – North-west to Killealy via R702 – North to Bunclody via R746

Route 7

Oulartwick – North to Ballincash – East to Kilnamanagh via Raheenduff Cross Roads – South to Oulart via R741 – East to Oulartwick via Monawilling.

Route 8(a)

Enniscorthy – North-west to Killealy via R702 – South to Killann via R730 and R731 – South-west to Rathnure, Ballywilliam and Ballyanne via R731 – South to New Ross Via N30 to junction with N25 – East to Carrickbyrne via N25 – North-east to Adamstown and the Leap via R735 – North –east to Enniscorthy via Bree Hill and Ballynapierce.

Route 8 (b)

Ballywilliam – North-west to Poullmounty River – South to Ballynabanoge via R729 – North-east to Ballywilliam via R731

Route 8 (c)

New Ross (at Oaklands) –South to Griffins Cross Roads via R733 – East to Tellarought Bridge via the entrance to John F. Kennedy Park and Arboretum – North to New Ross via R734 and R733

Route 9 (a)

Wexford – West to Barntown/Camaross/Carrickbyrne – North to Enniscorthy via Adamstown/ the Leap –South to Kyle Cross Roads via N11 – East to Castlebridge via Crossabeg and Artramon

Route 9 (b)

Ferrycarrig – North to Killurin via the Deeps Bridge – South to Muchwood Cross Roads – South-east to N11 via Irish National Heritage Park – North to Ferrycarrig

Route 10(a)

Campile – South to Ballyhack,- Arhurstown and Duncannon – South-east to Ballinruan Cross Roads – South to Houeland – South-west to Hook Head

Route 10 (b)

Hook Head – North-east to Graigue Little – South-east to Graigue Great – East to Baginbun Head – North to Fethard – North-east to Saltmills – North – east to Garrycullen along Coast Road – East to Clonmines – East to Wellingtonbridge on R733 – South to Kiltra on R736 – South along east side of Bannow Bay to Clammers Point

Route 10 (c)

Carrick –on – Bannow – South-east to Cooleskin – East to Duncormick – South-east to Killag – South to Kilmore Quay.

Route 11

Chour – West to Shilmore – North to Lady’s Island and Broadway – South-west to Tacumshane – South-east to Rostoonstown.

Route 12 (a)

Wexford – South west via R733 to Mullanour, Forth Commons – Waddingtown – North to Harperstown Cross Roads – North east to Turners Cross Roads – East to Mullanour via Forth Mountain

Route 12(b)

Mullanour on R733 – north-west over Shelmaliere Commons to King’s Ford Bridge – north-east to Barntown and N25 – east along N25 to Newtown Road roundabout.

8.6 The Coastal Zone

- 8.6.1 The coastal zone is of intrinsic natural and special amenity value. It contains an integrated series of fragile habitats many of which are of international and national importance protected by conservation designations. The coastline is the focus for increasing social, economic and recreational development. In particular it is a popular location for residential development.
- 8.6.2 The County Council recognises that the coastal zone is a vital asset with limited capacity to absorb development. Due to its unique character it requires special attention and management to ensure its long term sustainable use. This necessitates an emphasis on a scale and rate of development which can be accommodated without damaging or detracting from the basic qualities and attractions of the coast.
- 8.6.3 In seeking to reconcile and balance the conflicting demands made on coastal resources, the County Council will:

- *protect and retain remaining undeveloped coastal areas and areas which are vulnerable and sensitive to inappropriate development from intensive, haphazard, unnecessary housing, tourism and recreation development*
- *promote coastal villages and settlements as locations for housing, tourism and recreational development consistent with the availability of essential infrastructure and the protection of the environment and quality of life of local communities*
- *ensure that smaller settlements do not become dominated by holiday home developments and that provision is made for permanent housing*
- *provide satisfactory levels of water, wastewater treatment and roads infrastructure to facilitate the development of coastal villages and to restrict development in these areas until this infrastructure is available*
- *give priority to development which will be of most economic and social benefit to local communities through the provision of permanent employment opportunities, recreational and community facilities and which makes maximum sustainable use of the limited environmental capacity of coastal areas*
- *conserve and protect the internationally and nationally important habitats including Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas and contiguous habitats which contribute to the overall quality of the coastal environment*
- *maintain the quality of coastal waters by improving wastewater treatment infrastructure in coastal settlements*
- *protect bathing waters to meet the standards required by European Union Directives and to regain and maintain the Blue Flag status of the beaches of Courtown, Curracloe, Duncannon and Rosslare*
- *undertake environmentally sensitive coastal protection works and ensure that new development does not exacerbate existing problems of coastal protection or result in altered patterns of erosion, deposition or flooding elsewhere along the coast to the detriment of important habitats or coastal features*

8.6.4 A range of different policies in the Plan will have a direct bearing on coastal areas and will help in the realisation of the County Council's coastal policy objectives. In order to assist in the management of coastal areas and to control development in accordance with these objectives, a zonal policy will be pursued which will seek to concentrate development in built up areas, consolidate and improve areas characterised by scattered haphazard development and protect undeveloped and environmentally sensitive areas from intensive development. These areas are indicated on the **Coastal Development Policy Maps No.4**.

8.6.5 Coastal Development Policy Area 1 (Map No.4)

These areas contain a high combination of environmentally sensitive factors*. They are characterised by relatively little existing intensive development.

There will be a presumption against future intensive development within these areas because of potential adverse environmental impacts resulting from a proposed development or its induced secondary and/or ancillary development, including roads and services infrastructure or supporting land uses. The predominant land use in these areas should continue to be agriculture. Intensive development includes the cumulative impact of small and/or once off developments which concentrate within any part of the area. Small scale sustainable employment, enterprise and tourism developments (excluding the development of individual new build holiday homes), may also be considered particularly if they involve the regeneration and re-use of redundant rural buildings in accordance with the terms of the development plan.

8.6.6 Coastal Development Policy Area 2 (Map No.4)

These areas contain or are adjacent to a limited number of sensitive factors. They are characterised by patterns of discontinuous suburban development, one-off housing including second homes, caravan and mobile home parks. While agriculture should continue to be the predominant land use, low density developments will be open to consideration particularly where it involves the infilling and consolidation of existing pockets of development and contributes to rural regeneration and revitalisation. Development at higher densities will only be considered where they incorporate significant planning benefits including:

* Sensitive factors include Special Areas of Conservation; Special Protection Areas; Visually Vulnerable and Sensitive Landscapes Scenic Routes

- the provision and maintenance of leisure and recreation facilities and amenities and/or the provision of structured tourism facilities including horse riding, adventure and water sports.
- the provision and maintenance of new/improved coastal access points, rights of way and the improvement and upgrading of the Coastal Path.
- the provision of sustainable levels of public access to natural, cultural, scientific and social resources.
- the provision of infrastructure.

All development must comply with normal planning and environmental policies, standards and criteria contained in the County Development Plan. Environmental sensitivities must be noted and incorporated as a design consideration from the outset.

8.6.7 Coastal Development Policy Area 3 (Map No.4)

These areas include developed and development lands in villages and settlements, some lands surrounding developed areas, amenity areas, large mobile home and caravan parks. They usually have an established pattern of development while being relatively free of environmental and regulatory constraints. They have the environmental potential to absorb concentrations of coastal development subject to compliance with normal planning and environmental policies, standards and criteria contained in the County Development Plan. Village Development Plans for some of the areas are included in the County Development Plan. The County Council will prepare similar plans for other villages over the plan period on a prioritised basis. These village plans will give guidance to development within settlements and will provide for the zoning, servicing and development of land for housing at a range of densities and an appropriate range of services and facilities.

8.6.8 Within all coastal areas, the County Council will:

- *prohibit any new building or development including caravans and temporary dwellings within 50m of soft shorelines*
- *ensure that no new habitable structures are permitted below 3 metres (O.D. Malin) in the interests of public safety, the protection of property and residential amenity*
- *prohibit the removal of beach material, sand and gravel*
- *restrict the reclamation of wetlands and marshlands which would damage coastal habitats*
- *open up sea views from coast roads and restrict development on the seaward sides of roads where it would be injurious to amenities*
- *promote in co-operation with other agencies, the sensitive use of the coastal zone for tourism and recreation*
- *co-operate in the formulation of national policy on Coastal Zone Management*
- *ensure that, where new development is acceptable in principle, it is judged in terms of its implications for both land and sea including views from the sea, marine pollution, effects on marine life, etc*
- *keep foreshores, beaches and open space areas free from litter*
- *provide improved facilities including information and interpretative facilities*
- *consider the preparation of coastal area action plans for villages and settlements including plans covering groups of villages and settlements*
- *monitor and review the Coastal Development Policy.*

8.6.9 Coast Protection

Sections of County Wexford's 94 Km of coastline are severely affected by erosion losing an average of one metre per year. There is increasing concern that the process will be accelerated due to rising sea levels and increased storm frequency and intensity caused by global warming. Coast erosion poses a serious threat to public infrastructure, private property, tourism and recreation amenities, sites and areas of nature/conservation value and agricultural land.

8.6.10 It is an objective of the National Development Plan 2000 – 2006 to address on a prioritised basis urgent coastal erosion problems. The Plan proposes a national coastal protection strategy taking account of the need to adopt an environmentally friendly approach to providing the necessary protection and the need to ensure value for money in the works undertaken.

8.6.11 Coastal protection works have been carried out at a number of locations in recent years. In addressing this ongoing problem in the future the County Council will:

- *co-operate with the Department of the Marine and Natural Resources in undertaking coastal defence works at the following locations where need is greatest subject to the availability of necessary finance;*

Ballyconnigar;

Ballyteige;

Cahore;

Courtown;

Cullenstown;

Curracloe;

Pollshone;

Rosslare.

- *prohibit development in coastal areas in accordance with the Coastal Development Policy at locations where the natural erosion process is likely to threaten the viability of such development*
- *implement site specific management policies to ensure that erosion is not initiated or aggravated by the impact of human activities*
- *protect the integrity of coastal landforms and materials by the prevention of the removal of beach materials.*